Commentary

Volume Seventy-two, Number Three, September 1981

The Middle East: Carterism Without Carter?

Robert W. Tucker

Human Rights & American Power

Samuel P. Huntington

CBS vs. Defense

Joshua Muravchik & John E. Haynes

Philip Roth Then and Now	Ruth R. Wisse
The Quintessential Liberal	Robert Nisbet
From the Memoirs of an Administrator	John Hollander
John Hinckley—A Face in the Crowd	Peter Shaw
The Mogul Who Loved Art	David Aberbach

BOOKS IN REVIEW: Roger Starr/Hillel Halkin/James Nuechterlein/ Renee Winegarten/Arch Puddington

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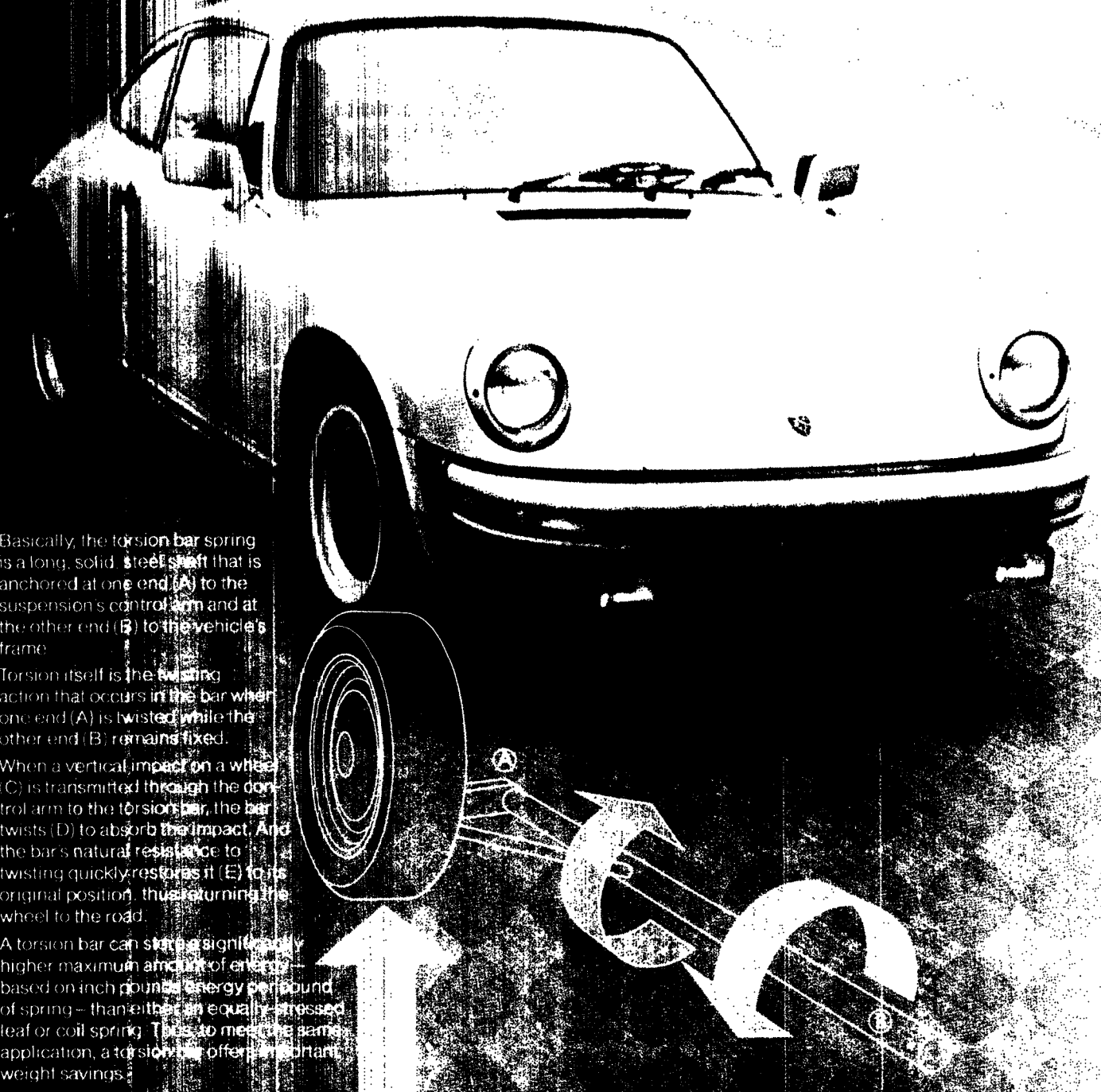

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Letters from Readers

Mexico & Latin America

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Carlos Rangel ["Mexico & Other Dominoes," June] has pierced the veil of political mythology and misinformation regarding Mexico. His article is very much to the point in explaining the basic economic, social, and political facts of that country. If President López Portillo continues to insist that the real problem of Central and South America is not Communism but the "antiquated political structures" of the nations in the area, he would do well to look at his own country.

Mexico's population of 70 million will reach 95 million in 1990. Half of its population is under fourteen years old. Every year 700,000 new jobs are needed, but the country can provide, at best, 300,000. The unemployment rate is about 20 percent; the underemployment rate is in the neighborhood of 50 percent. The government, or, more accurately, its elephantiasic bureaucracy, owns and controls 800 firms which, in 1978, produced a deficit of $6 billion. Forty percent of the population works on the land, but agricultural production is primitive and supplies only 10 percent of the gross national product. This 40 percent comprises the poor Indians who do not take part in the social, political, and economic life of the country.

Political mythology in Europe and the U.S. has it that Mexico is one of the few democracies in Latin America. But in reality it is nothing of the kind, despite a thinly disguised masquerade that takes place under the name of presidential elections. The presidential candidate is designated by the ruling group, the Institutional Revolutionary party (PRI), which is hardly revolutionary, but very much institutional.

Mexico's political system is, as Mr. Rangel correctly says, mildly authoritarian—indeed, one might say that it is much more authoritarian than many of the military governments that the PRI so violently condemns. The main problem of the PRI is to keep the country under control. Like many Social Democratic and Christian Democratic parties in other parts of the world, the PRI has been massively infiltrated by Cuban-influenced Marxists. To keep them and the large Indian majority under control, the ruling party applies a mixed system of Marxist rhetoric and police repression. In Freedom House's yearly rating, Mexico is listed as "partially free," just as are El Salvador and Guatemala. . . .

As Mr Rangel correctly points out, this situation makes Mexico extremely vulnerable to Soviet and Cuban propaganda. The government is painfully conscious of this, and it tries to appease those who hold such views with loud revolutionary rhetoric against "Yankee imperialism." It hopes also that by giving support to Cuban activities in the Third World it will buy some time. So far it has been right—after a fashion. The Soviet Union gives no overt support to the Mexican Communist party and less to the Mexican guerrillas, who are not even known to world opinion.

It must be clear to any beginner in geopolitics that the ultimate aim of Soviet-Cuban policy in Latin America is Mexico. With 1,600 miles of open borders and an oil wealth comparable to the oil countries of the Middle East, Mexico is a stepping-stone for Soviet policy in Latin America. The battle cry of the guerrillas last year was *"Nicaragua hoy, Salvador mañana"*; its battle cry today is *"Salvador hoy, Mexico mañana."*

This situation is very clear to the other "dominoes" in the region. In March of this year Colombia, after receiving evidence that its guerrillas had been trained in Cuba, broke off diplomatic relations with Cuba; Ecuador called back its ambassador to Cuba and froze its diplomatic relations on a chargé d'affaires level. Panama and Venezuela have publicly accused Cuba of promoting subversive activities in their respective countries. At the end of March, the Vice-Chancellor of Venezuela, Osvaldo Paez Pumar, said that "Cuba has caused a confrontation with all countries of Central America" and that the relations of his country with Cuba were at an all-time low. For all these countries the Cuban embrace has become too strong.

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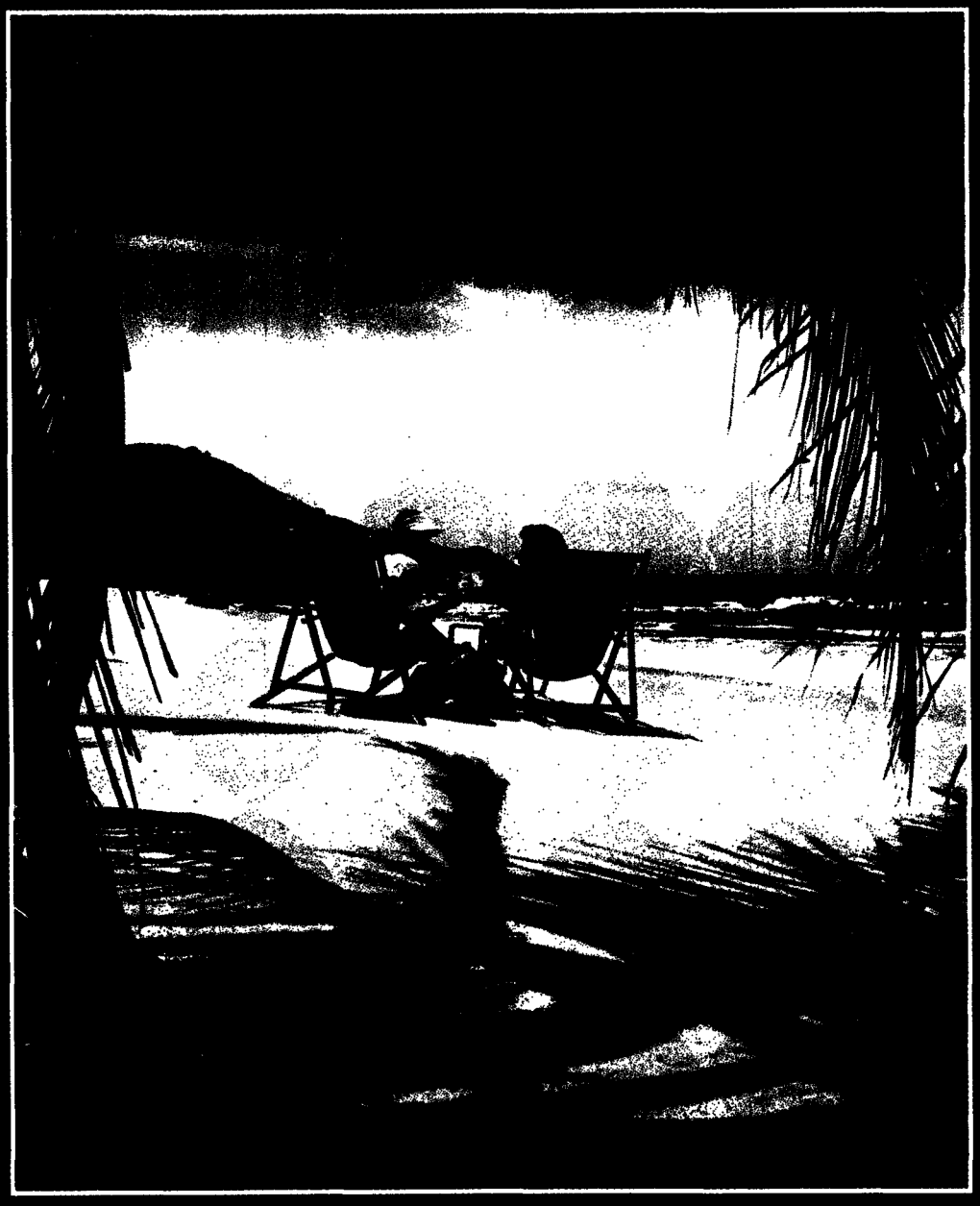

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What is the U.S. to do in this situation? . . . It would seem that the only alternative is to strengthen its ties to the aforementioned governments, which are beginning to free themselves of Cuban influence, and to the governments of the Southern Cone—Argentina, Brazil, and Chile. The governments of these countries do infinitely more for the bettering of the economic and social conditions of their underprivileged masses than any country in South America or, for that matter, Cuba or the Soviet Union. In Argentina, Brazil, and Chile a rapid and notable improvement in the living conditions of the masses has taken place and is a matter of record. This material progress, together with liberalization in the area of human and civil rights and elections which are already taking place (Brazil) or are scheduled for a fixed date (Chile), gives wide sectors of the population the certainty that their cause is not just a matter of empty propaganda, as in Cuba, but a very palpable fact. . . . What will count in the end is that the established timetable of modernization will in these countries lead to full freedom and to true economic and social integration of the underprivileged. If this were achieved, perhaps even the Mexican government would decide to follow such a course rather than continue its desperate attempt to keep the Soviet Union and Cuba, as well as its own leftist intelligenstia, at bay by aping pseudo-revolutionary models.

LEOPOLDO LOPEZ
Epoche
Munich, West Germany

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Carlos Rangel's statement that the United States installed Trujillo and Somoza as client tyrants reinforces a myth which through endless repetition has become widely accepted as truth.

It was in fact six years after the United States had terminated its intervention in the Dominican Republic that Rafael Leonidas Trujillo Molina, who had risen from junior officer in the Marine-trained constabulary to become commander of the new Dominican army, had himself named president of that country. The United States had no role in the process. Nor did it install Somoza in the presidency of Nicaragua.

Prior to the termination of U.S. intervention in Nicaragua, . . . the two candidates in the approaching presidential elections agreed to a procedure for selecting the Nicaraguan who would replace the American commander of the Guardia Nacional. Under this procedure, President Moncada named Anastasio Somoza Garcia . . . Guardia commander. Somoza was not appointed by the United States or at the suggestion of the United States. I know this because I was deputy chief of mission in the American legation at the time. (I have also served as a United States ambassador and am the author of *The Fractured Continent: Latin America in Close-Up.*) Some three years after the intervention had ended, Somoza became president. The United States had no role in that either.

For the rest, I consider Carlos Rangel a courageous exponent of the truth, and I find his article profound and persuasive.

WILLARD L. BEAULAC
Washington, D.C.

The First Amendment

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his thought-provoking article, "In Defense of Religious America" [June], Terry Eastland espouses a "narrow" interpretation of the establishment clause of the First Amendment. As he views it, all that the First Amendment prohibits is the establishment of a national religion, "but nothing *more* than that." Hence he believes that there can be government aid to religious groups so long as such aid furthers a public purpose and so long as all sects are benefited. Mr. Eastland attacks the "mythology" articulated by Chief Justice Earl Warren who said that the First Amendment "underwrote the admonition of Thomas Jefferson that there should be a wall of separation between church and state." He brushes aside as of small consequence Jefferson's letter to the Danbury Baptists, remarking that it is "simply not relevant to a consideration of the framing of the First Amendment and its original intention. . . ." Further on, in referring to the U. S. Supreme Court decision in *Everson* v. *Board of Education of Ewing Township* in 1947, Mr. Eastland speaks of "this new doctrine of neutrality . . ." and accuses the Court of "contradicting the historical meaning of the establishment clause of the First Amendment . . . ."

The Supreme Court's "broad" interpretation of the establishment clause in *Everson*, in which the Court said that the First Amendment "requires the state to be neutral in its relations with groups of religious believers and non-believers," is not "new." The Court was simply following the 1878 opinion in the case of *Reynolds* v. *United States* in which Chief Justice Morrison Waite, speaking for a unanimous Supreme Court, cited with approval Jefferson's letter to the Danbury Baptists, as follows: "Coming as this does from an acknowledged leader of the advocates of the measure, it may be accepted almost as an authoritative declaration of the scope and effect of the [First] Amendment. . . ."

But, of course, the case for Jefferson's staunchly "separationist" beliefs need not rest on his Danbury Baptists letter. As exemplified by his Virginia Statute of Religious Liberty, enacted in 1786 and a precursor of the First Amendment, Jefferson never deviated from his conviction that religion and government should be completely independent of one another and that nobody should be compelled to support any or all religions, including his own.

In referring to *Everson*, however, Mr. Eastland does not say nearly enough. In that case, the Court enunciated a rule of law, which was subscribed to by the entire bench at the time and was reaffirmed in three subsequent cases:

> The "establishment of religion" clause of the First Amendment means at least this: Neither a state nor the federal government can set up a church. Neither can pass laws which aid one religion, aid all religions, or prefer one religion over another. . . . No tax in any amount, large or small, can be levied to support any religious activities or institutions whatever they may be called or whatever form they may adopt to teach or practice religion. Neither a state nor the federal government can, openly or secretly, participate in the affairs of any religious organizations or groups and vice-versa. In the words of Jefferson, the clause against establishment of religion by law was intended to erect "a wall of separation between church and state."

Moreover, in his dissenting opinion in *Everson*, Justice Wiley Rutledge declared with perhaps even greater force:

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> The [First] Amendment's purpose was not to strike merely at the official establishment of a single sect, creed, or religion, outlawing only a formal relation such as had prevailed in England and some of the colonies. Necessarily it was to uproot all such relationships. But the object was broader than separating church and state in this narrow sense. It was to create a complete and permanent separation of the spheres of religious activity and civil authority by comprehensively forbidding every form of public aid or support for religion.

In an article in COMMENTARY, September 1962, entitled "School Prayers and the Founding Fathers," Leonard W. Levy, professor of constitutional history at Brandeis University, refuted the "narrow" interpretation of the establishment clause:

> The one fact which stands out from this review of the drafting of the First Amendment is that Congress very carefully considered and rejected the phraseology which spells out the narrow interpretation. At bottom the Amendment was an expression of the intention of the framers of the Constitution to prevent Congress from acting in the field of religion.

Levy went on to reason that "reference to the American *experience* with establishment of religion at the time of the framing of the Bill of Rights is essential for any understanding of what the framers intended." At the time the Constitution was adopted, a number of states adhered to multiple Christian establishments. According to Levy, the Founding Fathers, well aware of the existence of plural establishments, intended to bar not merely a single established church but also governmental support for religion in general.

As Mr. Eastland makes clear, the Founding Fathers were not hostile to religion *per se*. Far from it. In fact, most of them were God-fearing Christians. Yet nowhere in the Constitution is there any mention of Christ, nor is there any mention whatever of the Creator. These omissions were scarcely inadvertent; they knew perfectly well what they were doing. The framers knew that our country had been settled in large measure by refugees from religio-political despotisms, many of whom, ironically, were themselves infected with the virus of intolerance and sought to deny others in America the very freedom of worship they so passionately had demanded for themselves in Europe. They designed the Constitution accordingly.

It is surely of more than passing interest that Article VI of the Constitution, adopted overwhelmingly by the Constitutional Convention, declares that "no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States." Since this key provision so clearly permits an atheist or agnostic to hold public office, it is one more piece of evidence to buttress the Supreme Court's belief that the framers of the Constitution did intend that government be neutral between religious believers and non-believers.

One final point: contrary to Mr. Eastland's assertion, the attacks on the television evangelists of the so-called New Right in most instances have had precious little to do with "anti-religious bias." In fact, many of their most aggressive attackers have been liberal clergymen of various faiths. What is really at issue is not the New Right evangelists' "right to speak out on public issues," but rather their presumption, whether they are assailing abortion, the Equal Rights Amendment, the Panama Canal Treaty, or anything else, that only their brand of politics meets with the Lord's approval and that those who disagree with them are in league with the forces of Satan.

SAMUEL RABINOVE
White Plains, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Terry Eastland's "In Defense of Religious America" is an important corrective to the misreadings of history that have gained currency over the past few decades. It deserves to be read widely. However, Mr. Eastland's article swings the pendulum too far in the opposite direction and stands in need of some correction.

Specifically, Mr. Eastland relies on my monograph, *Religion and*

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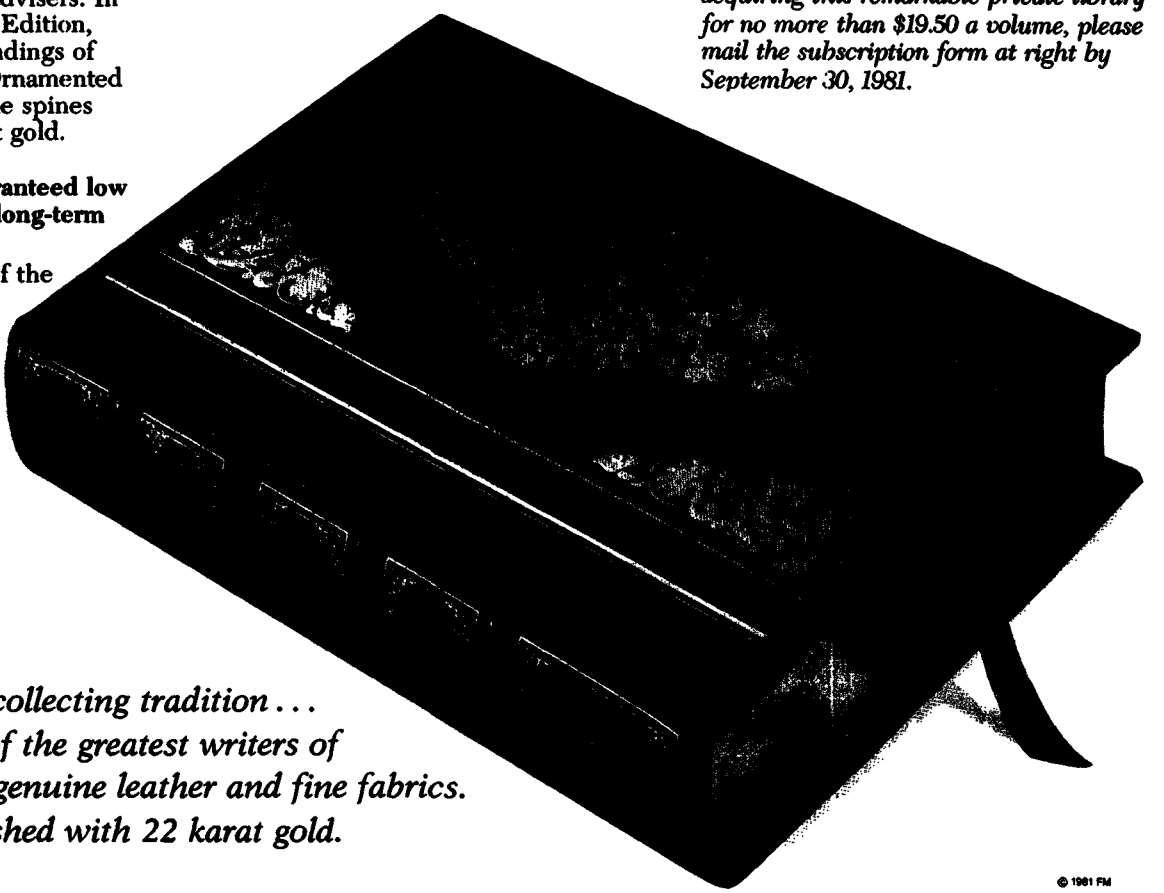

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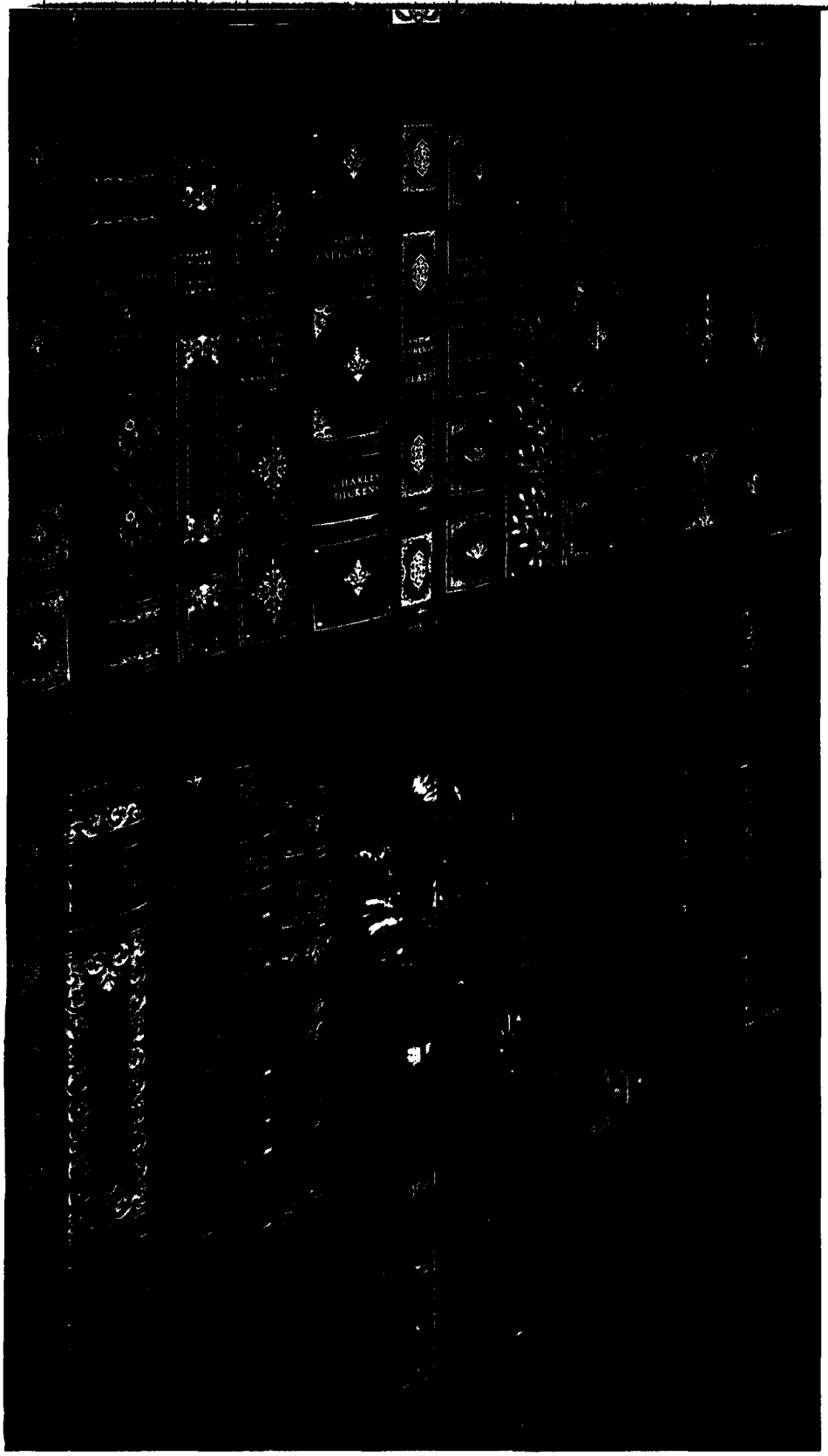

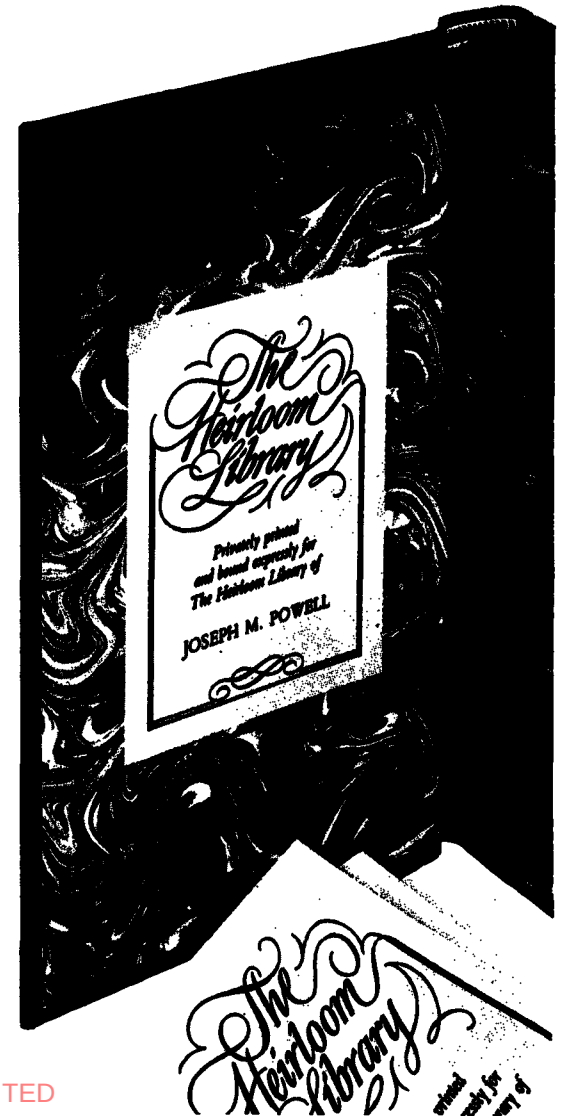
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Politics: The Intentions of the Authors of the First Amendment (American Enterprise Institute, 1978), to support the conclusion that "the neutrality the framers sought was . . . among the sects, the various denominations." I agree with Mr. Eastland that the framers did not mean the establishment clause to compel neutrality between religion and irreligion, but my monograph argued that what they wanted was a neutrality among *religions*, not merely among sects or denominations. The distinction is crucial if we want to use the original principles as a guide to current public policy—as Mr. Eastland and I both do.

Mr. Eastland's view, unless I misread him, would seem to imply a willingness to accept governmental establishment of nonsectarian Protestantism or Christianity, or perhaps some watered-down form of Judeo-Christianity. My own view would require governmental actions to pass a much more difficult test. Let me use two current issues to point out what this would mean in practice. Mr. Eastland and I would agree that tuition tax credits or vouchers are analogous to the forms of aid found in the Northwest Ordinance, and that they would pass constitutional muster under the First Amendment's original meaning. But I suspect we might part company over state-mandated prayers in public schools.

I believe the original rule, applied in today's religiously diverse nation, would prohibit governmentally required "nonsectarian" prayers. A moment set aside for silent prayer or meditation would be all right, and probably a good idea. However, it would be impossible to write an official prayer today without offending some religious people. People from one religion would be offended by prayers chosen from another, devout people from most faiths would be offended by lowest-common-denominator pabulum, and followers of certain Oriental religions that do not believe in a god to whom one prays would be offended by the implications of praying itself.

Mr. Eastland correctly points out that most of the framers did not focus on the difference between the two forms of neutrality. He also is right to identify Madison as the only important member of the first Congress who was outspokenly opposed to granting special preference to nonsectarian Christianity. However, what this historical analysis fails to point out is that virtually all of the framers accepted Madison's more basic principles about the role of government. These principles force one today to go beyond nonsectarianism to Madison's broader requirement of neutrality among religions.

The framers all agreed that religion played an important positive role politically. Hence the explicit refusal to require neutrality between religion and atheism. But they also saw religion as a potentially divisive force. The first object of government after defense, the Constitution tells us, is to insure domestic tranquility. Nothing is more threatening to that tranquility than the religious strife that comes when one group of people tries to force its form of worship on another. For that reason, the framers wholeheartedly accepted John Locke's limitation of governmental activity to the things of "this world." They also accepted Madison's view that an extended republic, with its religious and economic diversity, was the best safeguard against factional tyranny.

So, while the founders wanted to encourage religion to help promote citizen virtue, their governing principles at bottom were secular. Those principles fostered religious diversity. Diversity in turn means that one cannot return to nonsectarian Protestantism without threatening the political goals that the framers sought to serve through the First Amendment.

The political goals admittedly are at some tension with each other. It is hard to encourage religion and virtue while avoiding divisive religious strife. Nonsectarianism is an inadequate guide for this, as Madison saw. Religious nondiscrimination is much better suited to the delicate task required by the framers' complex intentions.

MICHAEL J. MALBIN
American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his article, Terry Eastland tries to manipulate history, in my opinion, to favor his views on religion and politics in America.

Mr. Eastland belittles Thomas Jefferson's influence on the separation of church and state in the Constitution, claiming that Jefferson did not represent the thinking of the framers because he was out of the country in the summer of 1789. I find Mr. Eastland's position to be rather absurd. Jefferson did not have to be present at the final hammering out of the Constitution to have his influence felt.

I believe that Jefferson did represent the thinking of the majority of the framers on the issue of separation of church and state. After all, his freedom-of-religion law in Virginia served as the model for the other states and for the Constitution. Jefferson believed that the government should be totally neutral in religious affairs and government and religion should be kept separate. He felt that it did not matter if his neighbor believed in twenty gods or no god at all, that a person should not be discriminated against by the government in matters of religion.

Mr. Eastland uses the fact that separation of church and state was not implemented perfectly as evidence that the framers did not believe in total government neutrality in religious matters, and he cites statements by some of the framers and laws passed by the states to back his position. But Mr. Eastland seems to have forgotten that throughout our history, many parts of the Constitution have been violated by the states and the national government, and many Americans have had their rights trampled on. . . .

Mr. Eastland further states that in the early days of the Republic most Americans, while not overly religious themselves, did not care if the separation of church and state was carried to its logical conclusion: total separation. This might be true, but it doesn't matter. The survival of our constitutional principles and guarantees does not (and should not) depend on the whim of public opinion. I do not think that Mr. Eastland would like it very much if his freedom of speech were subject to a vote. . . .

In his article, Mr. Eastland makes it clear that he has fallen for the Moral Majority argument that liberals are hypocrites when it comes to preachers and politics (i.e., liberals did not complain when Martin Luther King, Jr. became involved in politics, but did complain when Jerry Falwell became involved in the political arena). This argument, however, is based on the faulty assumption that Falwell is doing the same thing that King did.

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Most liberals do not believe that conservative preachers should stay out of politics, but they also believe that no religion (liberal or conservative) should be allowed to impose itself on the government or turn itself into a political machine. This is why many liberals are leery of the involvement of the religious Right in politics: the fundamentalists have shown a desire to impose their particular brand of religion on the rest of us (which is something that King did not try to do). Also, the Moral Majority has mistaken simple disagreement on the issues between themselves and liberals as "proof" that liberals want to keep them completely out of politics. The charge of hypocrisy against the liberals does not stand up to a close examination.

CHARLES E. WILSON, JR.
Clarksville, Maryland

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Terry Eastland has written a lawyer's brief for the argument that the First Amendment's prohibition against the establishment of religion was never intended to prevent the government from favoring religion, as opposed to humanism, in the general sense. By rejecting Jeffersonian comments and accepting both prior and subsequent sources concerning the inextricable relationship of Christianity and government, it is clear that the author has been selective in his invocation of authority. At least as sophisticated an argument for the contrary position can be, and of course frequently has been, mustered. . . .

American Jews have been accepted and have flourished in America in direct proportion to the disestablishment of state religion. If this nation should ever reestablish the author's Christian country, there may well be a rebirth of what he calls morality (with all of its implications, e.g., the nonavailability of abortion). However, this would also result in . . . a diminution of the very liberties that have allowed Jews in America to flourish in a manner that they have not enjoyed anywhere for centuries . . . and relegate them to second-class status, with all its implications.

STANLEY F. MELTZER
New York City

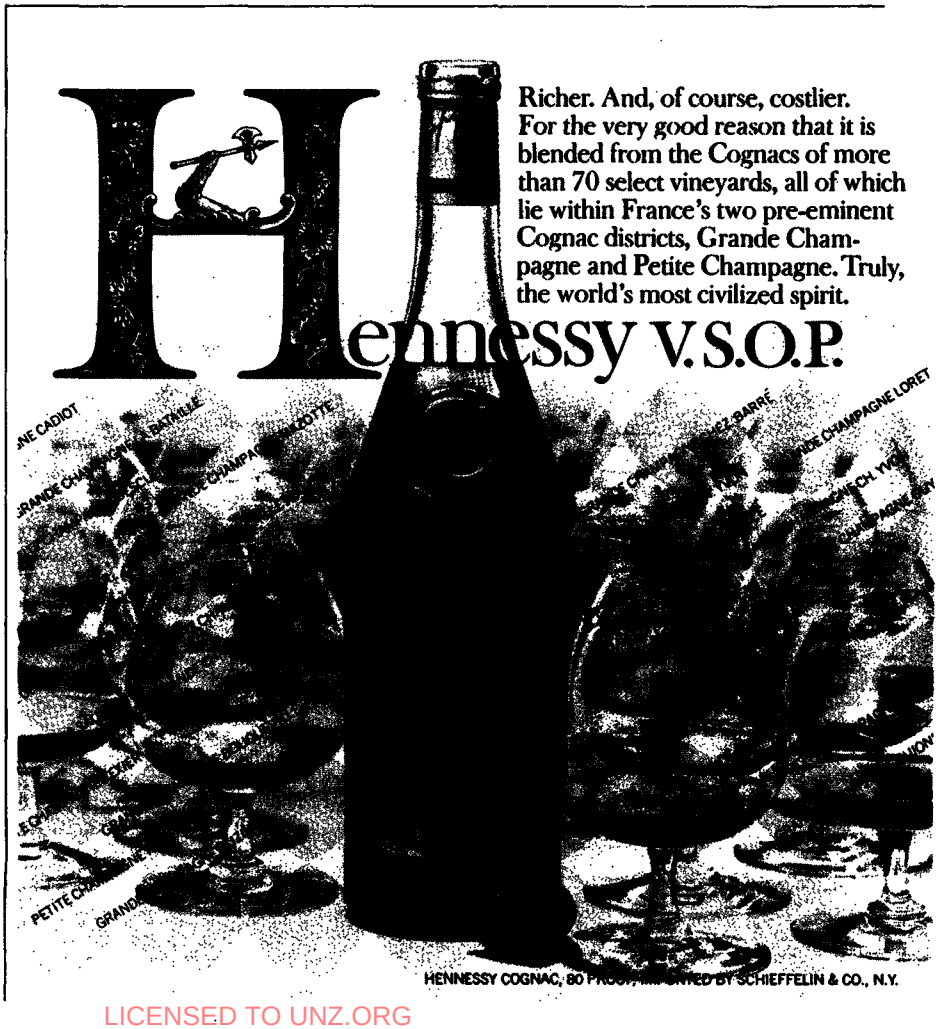
TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

There is a pathetic note in Terry Eastland's "In Defense of Religious America," describing as it does the decline of the once influential puritan Protestantism to the point where (if Mr. Eastland is representative) it now somewhat childishly complains that it is being left out of the discussion of public issues in this land, and just as irresponsibly blames its woes on outside forces—the current culprit being "secular humanism." Perhaps the question comes too late for profitable consideration by Protestants, but it may still be worth asking (as the uncritical Mr. Eastland does not): has not American Protestantism gradually worked itself into this corner of our culture? The Enlightenment was not, as Mr. Eastland would apparently have it, late in coming to America; it was prominently present at the nation's birth. But Protestantism . . . set aside Enlightenment views of reality, presumably hoping they would go away. Meanwhile much of American Protestantism let itself be almost wholly embraced by a mixture of pietism and the attitudes of the left-wing radical Reformation. The former had too narrow a view of Christian obedience and mission; the latter was, of course, not churchly but sectarian in essence, and was therefore indifferent and even hostile to broader cultural questions and the relationship of faith to these. For different reasons, both were anti-intellectual. In light of such history, it is surprising that Princeton University has a chapel at all, and that the (Presbyterian) seminary in the same town has any who can lay claim to being theologians. American Protestantism has paid dearly for its false choices. . . .

WILLIAM D. BOYD, JR.
University of Southern Mississippi
Hattiesburg, Mississippi

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Terry Eastland's article "In Defense of Religious America" makes it perfectly clear that the Constitution was written by religiously-minded men for a religiously-minded people; and that they did not intend the First Amendment to mean that (1) the churches of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America and the U.S. government should be absolutely separate, or (2) traditional religious and moral values should be segregated from our laws, and (3) God or the use of prayer should be excluded from our classrooms.

On the contrary, the framers believed that the civilizing spirit of religion was essential to the existence and well-being of a republic; and that the state which is obliged to "insure domestic peace" should support and promote the spread of religion because it is the way to peace.

In short, it is ridiculous to think, as many liberals do, that the framers wrote the First Amendment to shield public life from the influence of religion; if anything, they wrote the First Amendment to safeguard America from the religious and civil strife that would result if Congress ever established an official American church.

BRUCE F. STERLING
Staten Island, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Terry Eastland's remarks reminded me of the late Justice William O. Douglas's observation in 1952 that "The First Amendment . . . does not say that in every and all respects there shall be a separation of church and state. Rather it studiously defines the matter, the specific ways, in which there shall be no concert or union or dependency one on the other." He also noted that "We are a religious people whose institutions presuppose a Supreme Being."

Indeed, Justice Douglas was right: the authors of the First Amendment intended the Amendment not to safeguard society or the state from the influence of religion but, rather, to preserve and protect religious liberty from encroachments by the state.

Our forefathers firmly believed that a society's public morality depends on a religious foundation, and that the beneficial influence of religion on private morality is indispensable to the maintenance of good government and the survival of republican or self-government. Consequently, our Founding Fathers sought to preserve, protect, and foster the religious impulse and enterprise. They did not intend government "neutrality" toward religion—a neutrality that in modern times has become merely a cloak to hide governmental indifference and hostility toward religion. Rather, the Founding Fathers intended government to be the champion and defender of religion and religious liberty. The First Amendment scholar O. Carroll Arnold has put it very well: "One would never dream of asserting that the government is neutral toward freedom of speech or the press, and it is (or at least should be) equally non-neutral toward religion and religious freedom."

HAVEN BRADFORD GOW
Arlington Heights, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I have just finished reading Terry Eastland's article, "In Defense of Religious America." To read an article on so important a subject, written so well, with so many telling observations, filled me with something like exhilaration. I have seldom enjoyed anything so much, or felt that a writer had said something which so badly needed saying. . . .

It is my hope that this article will be read as widely as possible and that it will help counter the trend toward silencing those whose moral views have a religious foundation. . . .

REO M. CHRISTENSON
Miami University
Oxford, Ohio

TERRY EASTLAND writes:

My critics implicitly raise a question that must be plainly put: where does one turn to discover the original understanding of the religion clauses of the First Amendment (or, for that matter, of any part of the Constitution)? Samuel Rabinove, for example, turns to Chief Justice Waite, who turned to Thomas Jefferson (as did the Court in *Everson,* in 1947, and as did Chief Justice Earl Warren). Charles E. Wilson, Jr. also turns to Jefferson, as would, apparently, Stanley F. Meltzer. Almost everyone, it seems, wants to turn to Thomas Jefferson.

Now Jefferson's views were widely influential in 1789, the year the First Amendment was drafted. And it is true, as Mr. Wilson says, that "Jefferson did not have to be present at the final hammering out of the Constitution to have his influence felt." Yet if Jefferson's influence is to have registered in the way Mr. Wilson thinks it did, then one should expect that his influence would be evident in the debates on the First Amendment in the first Congress. But as Michael J. Malbin has shown, in the study I relied on in my article, the view of Jefferson (and Rabinove *et al.*) was not the view that prevailed.

To have an accurate view of the original understanding of the First Amendment, one must pay attention to the debates most relevant to its framing—and those were the debates of the framers themselves in the first Congress. Others may wish to manipulate history, as Mr. Wilson would do, or write a lawyer's brief, as Mr. Meltzer might do, in order to have Jefferson's views prevail as the original understanding of the First Amendment. But the evidence available shows that the truth is otherwise.

Beyond this, it must be said that there is a larger question of constitutional interpretation—namely, whether we today should be bound by the original understanding of, say, the establishment and free-exercise clauses. My critics clearly would not wish to be bound by the original understanding, nor would I, at least not in every respect, for who today would want state establishments of religion, which the framers clearly intended not to disturb? But I would still insist that the original understanding be given some weight. How much weight is, of course, the heart of the matter, and answers to this question finally will turn upon arguments about the nature and meaning of religion in American life. Suffice it for me to say (again) that religion, as Tocqueville observed, was America's "foremost political institution," and if we reject its importance in our public life, we do so at our own peril as a nation.

Mr. Malbin finds more disagreement between us than exists. The framers, with the prominent exception of Madison, did not wish to broaden the principle of neutrality to mean neutrality among religions, as opposed to just the various Protestant sects. But—and here again there is a point to be made about historical fact and constitutional interpretation—principles and ideas live their own lives, and the narrower, original principle of neutrality among the sects was later fertilized with Madisonian ideas, so that, as Mr. Malbin writes, we "*today* [must] go beyond nonsectarianism to neutrality among religions" (emphasis added).

I agree with Mr. Malbin on the policy questions of school prayer and tuition tax credits, and on his

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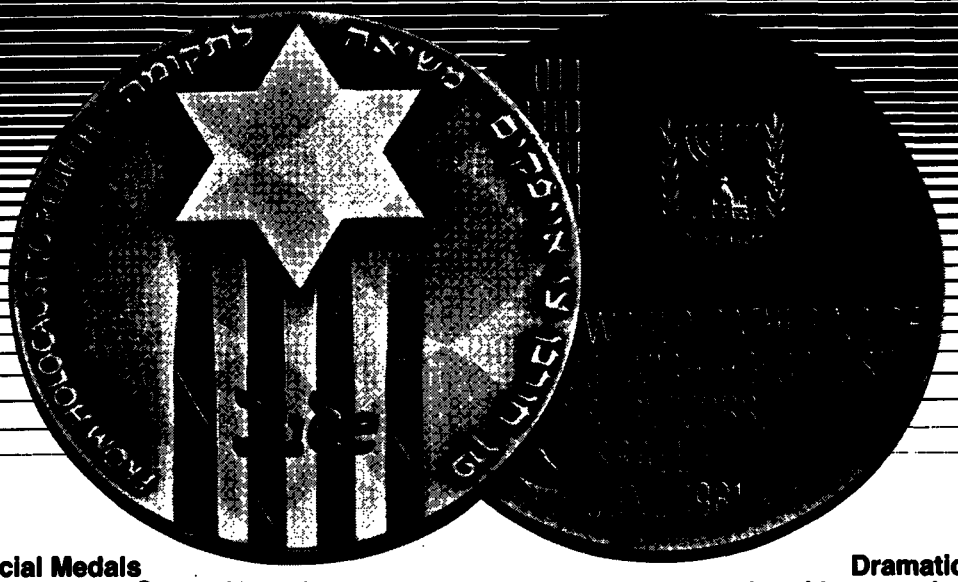

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understanding of the founders' fear of religion as a potentially divisive force. Finally, let me state here clearly that I was *not* arguing for the government establishment of "nonsectarian Protestantism," of "some watered-down form of Judeo-Christianity," or of any religion. In this connection, let me emphasize a word in the title of my piece: "In Defense of *Religious* America."

William D. Boyd, Jr., like some of my other critics, cannot read. I did not blame Protestantism's woes on "the current culprit" of "secular humanism." And I did attribute some of these woes to Protestantism itself. I do agree with Mr. Boyd that "American Protestantism has paid dearly for its false choices." But I wonder whether he would agree with my view that much of mainline Protestantism is so much a part of the establishment today that many of its clergymen could toil in the offices of Health and Human Services without significant loss of either function or mission.

Mr. Meltzer should calm down and reread my piece. I did not call for the reinstitution of a "Christian country," nor for second-class citizenship for anyone.

Finally, to Mr. Rabinove, it must be said that there is "anti-religious bias" operating today. People with religious convictions—and I do not mean the idiots who preach that on, say, the issue of the Panama Canal Treaty "only their brand of politics meets with the Lord's approval"—do frequently find that their views are written off or laughed away either because they themselves are religious or else because their views have religious roots. But the evidence for this point is personal and anecdotal, and every reader will have to judge it for himself. I simply note this, from an article by Charles Krauthammer, "The Humanist Phantom" (*New Republic,* July 25, 1981): "Several years ago the great Australian neurobiologist, Sir John Eccles, ended a Harvard lecture on brain organization by admitting that although evolution could account for the brain, it could not, in his view, account for the mind, with its mysterious capacity for consciousness and thought: only something transcendent could account for that. The audience began hissing."

Let me end by expressing my thanks to Bruce F. Sterling, Haven Bradford Gow, and Reo M. Christenson.

The New Motherhood

To the Editor of Commentary:

If Naomi Munson had limited her observations to the excesses of "prepared" childbirth, "Having Babies Again" [April] would have been an amusing piece of social commentary. There is indeed something shameless about fathers scurrying around the delivery room photographing—and later publicly exhibiting—the emergence of the child from its mother's womb. So too should something be said about the silly but widely held view that nursing immediately after delivery is essential to the development of a strong "bond" between mother and child—as if what happens in the next twenty years is less important.

But in attempting to explain the causes of a "dissatisfaction" which Mrs. Munson believes is the "common condition of . . . young women . . . everywhere," her ambitions outstrip her insights. Mrs. Munson must indeed be a *very* young writer to have given us such a simple and distorted picture of the "new pregnancy and the new motherhood." An account in which a woman's resentment (of her child), rage and anger (at her husband), and, above all, selfishness, explain everything from amniocentesis—a defective baby would be inconvenient?—to a (here we go again) "new" permissiveness.

I can only hope that Naomi Munson is not too young to exchange her role of social critic for the one she believes will bring women happiness and fulfillment. This would give working mothers like me more time to play with our children—the one thing Mrs. Munson and I would both agree is more rewarding than responding to such polemical nonsense.

Jean Yarbrough
Director, Institute for Political
Philosophy and Policy Analysis
Loyola University
Chicago, Illinois

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . It is most enjoyable to see a complex and highly emotional subject reduced to a simple and highly emotional formula under the pen of an assuredly able writer. Naomi Munson's article is an absolute dream for the General Semanticist, who will find in it enough generalizations and abstractions to keep him (or her) busy for quite some time. No matter, though, that the tone and style of the piece fascinate as they grate on me; it is the content, specificially the vocabulary, which concerns me here, for I believe it amply illustrates a fact of contemporary life, namely, that our opinions are swayed and even formed by the deliberate use and misuse of language.

The writer initially sets out to create antagonism toward "these aging sophisticates," the subjects of her article. Under the perhaps justifiable assumptions that a majority of her readers do not live on New York's Upper East Side and resent the fact that other people can afford to, she describes "baby carriages . . . as common as Peugeot racing bikes," "the maternity bathing suit . . . overtaking the maillot," and beach bags "more often filled with zwieback than with marijuana." Obviously, the wealthy, carefree subjects of her writing have been oversupplied with life's blessings; it is not far-fetched to assume that an average reader's reaction might be to redress that imbalance by depriving these women of an objective and fair hearing.

Having reached the age where pregnancy must come at once if at all, these women turn from the example of their own mothers, who "plunged unthinkingly into the procreative cycle," and "in a rational and intelligent manner" use tests such as amniocentesis to determine whether or not their babies will be genetically flawed. The implication is that the tests are undertaken out of motives which could be described as fascist: the simple desire to raise a pure and "perfect" baby. A fairer writer might have allowed the wisdom of such action, given the increasing incidence of genetic disorder in proportion to the advancing age of the mother.

Mrs. Munson has seen into the inner feelings of each woman over thirty and under forty-five, living on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. Similarly, all women in their mid- to upper twenties are realizing that "the world of work is not quite what it has been cracked up to be . . . what's more, they are subject to bouts of loneliness and unaccountable depression." Not surprisingly, Mrs. Munson has a solution for all: "the ultimate satisfaction is not to be found in the office. . . ."

Thus is "motherhood" vindicated and women returned to their homes (where they belong); the world continues as it always has

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been, before a few "fashionable feminists" attempted to disturb the status quo.

In the interests of sanity, I must say that I think it dangerous to speak of "all" women, or "ultimate satisfaction," or to pretend that the basic issue here is a conflict—solely the woman's, mind you—between the world of work and the panacea of motherhood. There is no panacea. It is equally foolish to pretend that all dissatisfaction, the "common condition of the young women I work with," stems from one cause and can be cured with one solution. I would not disagree that motherhood viewed simply as "another attainment" is unsatisfactory because unsatisfying to all concerned, but neither am I convinced by dogmatic assertion and moral outrage that motherhood is the solution to all malaise for all young women. . . .

The article is a pernicious simplification of a troubling and significant contemporary issue. The viciousness of tone may stem as much from journalistic device as from the troubled conscience of the writer. Nevertheless, it is an important article, more because of the issues it raises than the issues that are actually presented. There is, indeed, "discontent" among today's young people, not only its young women; is this "discontent" simply a fact of life for younger people, or does it have deeper implications for today's society? . . . There are crucial decisions to be made about "parenting." . . . But looking backward, as Mrs. Munson does, to a Golden Age when men were men and women were mothers at home, will not help us face up to the problems of an increasingly complex world. . . .

SUSAN LABASCHIN
Plainview, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

At the risk of sounding as peevish and vitriol-filled as "young writer" Naomi Munson, I would like to respond to her article on a number of levels.

On the simplest level, one must take exception to her tone. Who is this Munson that she so poisonously apes the terrified anti-development men of the past decade or so? . . . Is she so embittered with her late or absent maturation level that she must carp at the achievements of her sisters? What is wrong, on any level, with determining, after career and self are well looked into, that a baby is a wondrous gift for all that?

On another level, she—is the writer really a female anyway?—seems unable to establish what point she's trying to make: she carps at the desire to learn if the embryo is defective via amniocentesis; at the new and delicious attention of many males to their half of the birthing process (. . . but what's *wrong* with men finally waking up to their own tenderer sides?); even, honest to Garden of Eden, at natural childbirth classes with their attendant reduction of reliance on anesthesia! . . .

A not very close reading of her ridiculous snootiness would reveal that she wishes nothing so much as a fervent return to the marvy old days when women bore children in pain and travail, bore retarded or severely handicapped infants to hand stoically to uncaring, brutish husbands who made a quick moué of disgust and tossed the unwanted charges back to Madame Saint-in-Residence. . . .

Contrary to my experience and that of myriads of my friends, acquaintances, and peers in every echelon of every developed society, women are not undertaking childbirth lightly. They are not cavalier in recognizing parental responsibility. The guilt the author speaks of is there in both types of mothers, working *and* non-working. And with the economic squeeze bound to get more pronounced for the rest of this hapless century, these so-called liberated women don't flounce into work just for self-fulfillment, as the young writer alleges: they work for the same reason 99 percent of men work—they have to, to pay the rent and electricity bills.

Dear Naomi Munson, your protestations are suspect. You see something happening, but you don't know what it is . . . and you're feeling left out. Because you're not having babies, are you? You're writing for all you're worth. Until the time comes for your turn at bat. When you'll do precisely what every prototype in your article did. Because it makes practical sense.

MARION DREYFUS
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . I am a twenty-eight-year-old "career woman" who takes quite seriously the decision of when or whether to have a child. I deeply resent Naomi Munson's implication that my decision will have anything to do with perceived fads or "style." The desire to maintain and further a career and also experience the joys (and sorrows) of parenthood creates a tremendous and real conflict. Mrs. Munson makes light of this conflict by presuming to know the thoughts and feelings of the women she describes. . . .

She says that these women's lives are empty and that a child will not fill the void. How does she know this? . . . She implies that a child left by day in the care of anyone but the mother (this presumably includes the father) will be maladjusted. There is, of course, no evidence for this. . . .

It is impossible to know from her bitter and sarcastic attack what it is that she wants. Does she want women to stay home? Does she want women to put aside careers to have children? Does she want women to do it all with no help? Does she want all women to be free-lance writers so they can manage their time as they choose?

I suppose that if Naomi Munson got pregnant she would pack up her pens and pads and skip on home. No conflict, no second thoughts. She would have a "normal" anesthetized birth while her husband sat in the waiting room. Then hubby would go back to work and she would raise a perfectly well-adjusted child. . . .

ANN E. MARGOLIN
Dallas, Texas

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

One might expect Naomi Munson, "a young writer," to show compassion for working women having babies now, and to demonstrate an understanding of the social, economic, and political contexts in which such women must make difficult choices. Instead, Mrs. Munson prefers to sneer and to disparage the struggles of everyday living and of conscience that working mothers endure.

The "older" women, about whom Mrs. Munson curls her lip and quivers her nostrils, were in the vanguard of changes that have opened up possibilities for women undreamed of only ten years ago. Possibilities, though, are not realities. Women are promised much, but they are hardly supported in their efforts to become complete women. Women *can* succeed in today's corporate world only if they become men. . . .

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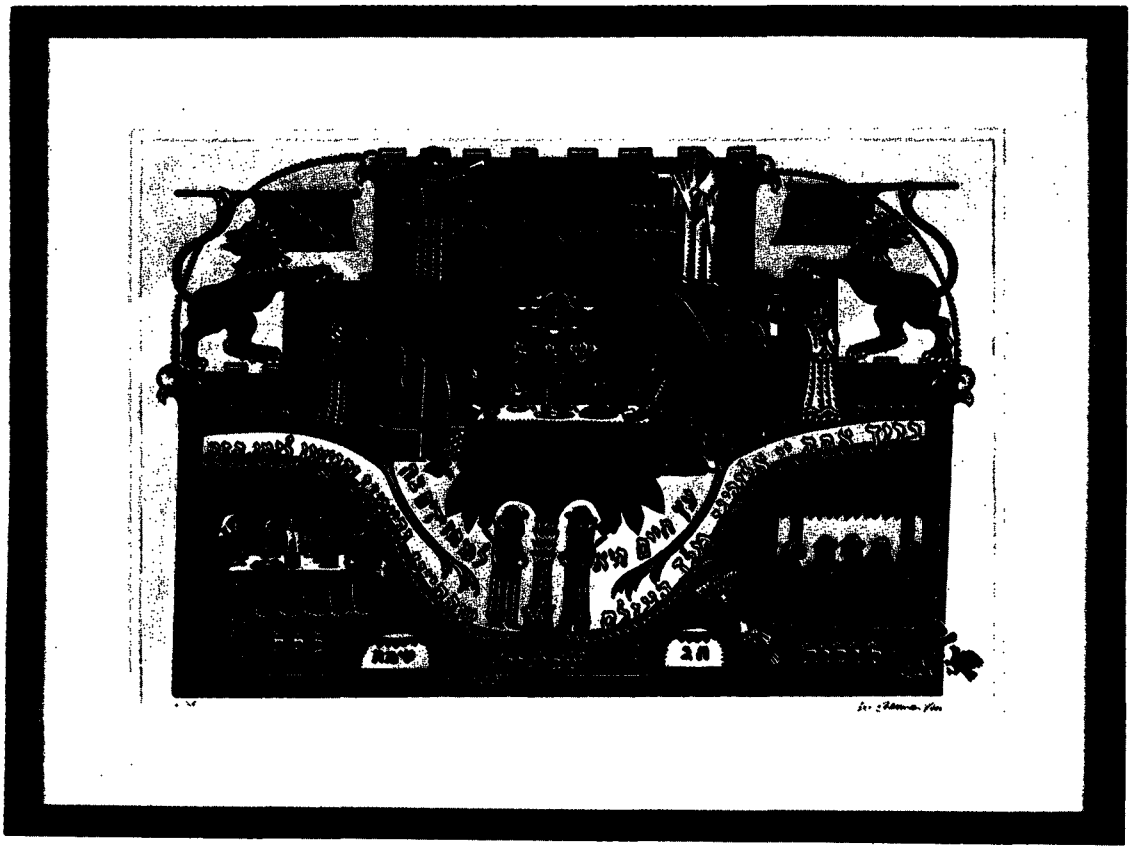

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The Jewish Year

by

Ori Sherman

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Left of center, a woman lights a menorah to celebrate the festival of *Hannukah*. Right of center are the heroes of the *Purim* story: King Ahasuerus, Mordecai, and Queen Esther. And directly below the Sabbath scene are two men standing on either side of a palm tree and holding scrolls of the Torah...symbolizing the feast of *Shavuoth*, commemorating the giving of the Law. The Hebrew legend reads, "It is a tree of life to them who hold fast to it."

In the bottom left corner is a Jewish family celebrating *Pesach* by partaking of the Seder. At bottom right, a family sits in the traditional booth of boughs and greenery, observing the festival of *Sukkot*.

At upper left, a man blows a ram's horn to usher in the New Year, *Rosh Hashana*. And opposite, at right, a man garbed in white beats his breast and asks forgiveness on the great fast of *Yom Kippur*.

All of these individual scenes are beautifully brought together within a surrounding portrayal of the citadel of Jerusalem. On its ramparts, Lions of Judah bear banners proclaiming in Hebrew, "Rejoice in your festivals!" And the turrets at the bottom echo the message, "Happy Holiday!"

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Women are told that the world is theirs for the taking, that they can be anything they choose. They are told this in colleges and universities across the land, and they believe it. Companies vie for their services, industries are geared to serving the working woman, magazines proliferate, especially for them. But instead of being liberated, women find themselves in the same working situations as do men: carrying out boring, unsatisfying tasks, fighting for the same promotions, competing for the same scarce resources.

What this might indicate, contrary to Mrs. Munson's interpretation, is not that women are better off in the home and the kitchen caring for the kiddies, while hubby deals with the dull and dirty business world, but that liberation has not yet been realized. The changes that would make life better for both men and women have not happened. . . .

MONICA B. MORRIS
Los Angeles, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In her discussion of the prenatal diagnosis of birth defects, Naomi Munson gives the impression that amniocentesis is routinely available to all pregnant women on demand, and that the sole intent of the test is to abort affected fetuses. This is far from the case.

Laboratory tests of amniotic fluid must be individually tailored to specific genetic or chromosomal disorders. It is impossible to run across-the-board assays on the chance of picking up anything that might be amiss. So the test is necessarily limited to women who are medically "at risk" because they are carriers of certain inherited disorders, have a previous child with a birth defect for which a test exists, a family history of a specific inheritable disorder, or are of advanced maternal age (over thirty-five).

Competent genetic counseling to determine risk, prenatal diagnosis where indicated, and laboratory analyses are all essential components of the complex, relatively expensive genetic-services "package." Even in New York City and environs, with the greatest number of centers offering genetic services in this country, the needs of families at risk are too great to permit limited facilities and trained staffs to extend services to the pregnant population in general.

Those who are served seek help to allay anxieties that would cause many to avoid pregnancy altogether, or to abort if accurate information were not available. All studies published to date have shown with remarkable consistency that between 95 and 97 percent of women who undergo amniocentesis are reassured that the condition they are concerned about is not present in the fetus. Others have shown a dramatic decrease in abortions among families "at risk" because of specific disorders since the introduction of prenatal diagnosis.

ARTHUR J. SALISBURY, M.D.
March of Dimes
Birth Defects Foundation
White Plains, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Naomi Munson's article is both judicious and astute, qualities all too often lacking in "young writers" when they react to current tides in the women's movement.

Today, the speed of communications establishes the "in thing" almost immediately—not only where to eat and what to wear, but the "correct" attitude to have toward sex, gender, child-rearing, and rationalizations about child-rearing.

In regard to child-rearing, day-care centers, no matter how good they are, and few of them are good, are not the complete answer. The very young child does not require socialization; he needs time to grow and learn under the constant direction of a loving mother, an insoluble dilemma when seen in terms of the mother's career.

My particular concern is with the evolution of the male in current and future society. Lacking the ability to bear children, the male has always been an auxiliary figure, driven to find self-esteem in his utility to his family and in some degree of success in the outside world. Men tend to fear women in any case, and with the growth of female power, today's young men have come to feel unbearably threatened. If I am not mistaken, the increased violence and the high death rate of the under-twenty-four age group from alcohol, drugs, suicide, and vehicular accidents reflect this.

The female child is not afraid of her mother, but she may resent her mother's neglect of her in favor of a profession, the broken and realigned home, and the feeling she gets of being unloved, unimportant, and only accessory to her mother's self-esteem. If, currently, half the population needs psychotherapy, what will the next generation be like? And their children?

GRACE RUBIN-RABSON
Los Angeles, California

NAOMI MUNSON writes:

The inclination, displayed by Jean Yarbrough, Marion Dreyfus, and Ann E. Margolin, to dismiss any conflicting view as necessarily the result of ignorance or inexperience serves more as a revelation of shoddy intellectual habits than as a contribution to serious discussion of the issues. These women, who know nothing of my personal life, feel entitled to assume that I have had no children of my own, and that if I did, I would undoubtedly raise them in a manner consistent with *their* views. This form of argument may be a big hit at consciousness-raising meetings, but in the real world it is no more than a manifestation of a petulant refusal to be disagreed with.

My understanding of the condition of women, contrary to the assertions of Miss Yarbrough, is a product neither of youth nor of inexperience but of observation of the world around me. Rather than wasting her time on "polemical nonsense," Miss Yarbrough might indeed do better to spend some of it taking a closer look at her own surroundings.

I must confess to some gratification at Susan Labaschin's belief that my work is effective. But I hardly think it needed my pen to arouse antagonism toward women who dishonor their parents, slight their husbands, and neglect their children; this they accomplish very nicely on their own. That Miss Labaschin considers the impulse to reject flawed children (which she herself describes as fascist) to be a sign of wisdom in women over thirty-five is a matter best left to her own conscience.

Being, unlike Marion Dreyfus, sadly deficient in exposure to "every echelon of every developed society," I can only say that her ideas nevertheless strike a resoundingly familiar note. The notion, for example, that manly tenderness is properly expressed only in the delivery room or nursery and the view that before she came on the scene childbirth was of necessity hell, children were of necessity retarded, and husbands were of necessity brutish are so common as to be clichés among precisely

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those well-educated and successful women in the very limited "echelon" I described. In some sort of perverse attempt at solidarity with their less fortunate sisters, women of this social stratum wish to preserve the fiction that they work to pay for the rent and electricity; the truth is that they work more often than not to pay the Bloomingdale's bill or to finance their Virgin Island vacations.

Ann E. Margolin clearly wishes to believe that her own ideas about childrearing are original and uncontaminated by fashion. Let me point out to her that my article was not about what I want but about what exists, about what constitutes the latest thing in motherhood for a certain segment of today's women; Miss Margolin's thoughts on the matter fit in perfectly.

Monica B. Morris asks compassion for working women because their expectation that the life they have chosen would be made fun, interesting, and undemanding has not yet been met. My own pity is reserved for their children, for whom life is not a matter of choice, and who are, by definition, unlike their mothers, entitled to the childish demand that the world should be a safe and loving place.

I did not, as Arthur J. Salisbury suggests, give the impression that amniocentesis is available to all pregnant women. On the contrary, I said explicitly that it is recommended primarily for women over thirty-five. As to the purpose of the procedure, Dr. Salisbury himself makes it quite clear, despite his assertion to the contrary, that it is indeed to abort "affected" fetuses. Many women who would avoid pregnancy but for the test are now consenting to become pregnant only on the promise that they will be able to abort if the child they are carrying is "affected." That 97 percent of the fetuses are found to be healthy is irrelevant; the obvious implication is that if they were found to be flawed they would be aborted. That amniocentesis also saves some healthy babies who might otherwise be denied life may be an ancillary benefit; none of this, however, can disguise the truth that a primary function of amniocentesis is to contribute to a world where imperfect children are not permitted to be born.

Finally, my thanks to Grace Rubin-Rabson for her kind words and her own interesting perspective on the issues.

Supply-Side Economics

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Irving Kristol's article, "Ideology & Supply-Side Economics" [April], has amusing echoes of the preconditions for any revolutionary economic theory outlined by the late Harry G. Johnson in his neglected book, *The Shadow of Keynes*. These were: (a) a nasty policy problem, baffling contemporary orthodoxy; (b) a new theory that actually absorbs discreetly as much as possible of the old; (c) sufficient difficulty in the new theory to deter established economists, while keeping it accessible to their younger, hungrier colleagues; (d) a new and appealing methodology —in the supply-siders' case, a shift from macroeconomic quantitative to microeconomic qualitative; (e) some empirical relationship measuring which will keep quiet the remote but potentially dangerous tribe of econometricians—here the marginal impact of tax-rate cuts on work and saving.

Johnson gloomily concluded that his own candidate, monetarism, would not completely replace Keynesianism, because unemployment would always be more frightening than inflation. But supply-siders offer an answer to the marriage of both—stagflation.

This is not to disparage Mr. Kristol's remarkable achievement. Intellectual movements necessarily have a human dimension. In fact, he probably understates his theoretical case. Tax-rate cuts do not require compensating revenue reflows to avoid an inflationary deficit: they can be financed out of the public's (hoped-for) increased savings. And the demands of opponents that "academic proof" be supplied to back up supply-side predictions reflect the misapprehension that economics is a physical science rather than a rational abstraction whose essential demand is internal consistency.

Still, it's the supply-siders' political acumen that marks them as the heirs of Keynes. The self-conscious network of supply-siders in academe and on Capitol Hill, for example, has unmistakable parallels with the New Deal, when a similar faction not only secured the repetition of its policies when they failed —but persuaded voters and historians that they had worked!

PETER BRIMELOW

Barron's
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

It is hard to disagree with Irving Kristol's statement that public discourse on economic policy is disgracefully inadequate, especially after reading his article on supply-side economics. I consider the article to be full of misunderstandings, replete with unjustified innuendoes about the economics profession, and in general a triumph of caricature over fact in discussing economic issues.

The most astonishing example of Mr. Kristol's misrepresentation of economics is his statement that neo-Keynesian theory regards a combination of inflation and lagging economic growth as impossible. Presumably he means by this that from the viewpoint of modern macroeconomic theory, stagflation is impossible. This is an old charge that simply will not wash. It is true that the Phillips curve implies a tradeoff between inflation and unemployment. But it is incorrect to conclude from this, as too many non-economists have done, that rising inflation and rising unemployment (falling gross national product) are impossible from the perspective of economic theory that takes such a relationship into account.

The Phillips curve relationship is only one of a number of factors that have an impact upon inflation and employment. When these other factors are taken into account, it is quite possible from the viewpoint of economic theory to have inflation and unemployment rising simultaneously. Rudiger Dornbusch and Stanley Fischer, for instance, state clearly in their work on macroeconomics that "there is no law of economics which says the inflation rate and the level of output move in the same direction at all times." . . .

There are a number of other instances in the article where Mr. Kristol misrepresents things: his assertion about the nature of postwar Japanese and German economic policy; his confusion about the difference between gross national product and an economic model; his exaggerated use of certain anomalies in the national income accounts which are of little practical significance; etc.

But to my mind the most serious problem with Mr. Kristol's article lies in his explanation of the breakdown of macroeconomic policy in the 1970's. Mr. Kristol would have us believe that this was due to

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a breakdown of the Keynesian model. But there are, I feel, cogent reasons for believing that the breakdown of stabilization policy in the 1970's was not a failure of our macroeconomic or, if you will, Keynesian policy tools. The breakdown occurred because of our failure to apply our policy tools properly in the circumstances we faced and because of our failure to recognize their limitations in dealing with the type of inflation we were then encountering. . . .

JOHN HOWARD WILHELM
Carlisle, Pennsylvania

Jewish History

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

We are pleased that David Vital lauds our book, *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History,* as "the best of its kind" [Books in Review, March]. We are also gratified that he discusses our book in terms of serious methodological concerns. This debate raises pedagogical and historiographic issues. Both students and the general reader presented with primary documents of modern Jewish history must be alerted to the often contradictory dimensions of this history. Modernity is not only a chronological category, but also a dynamic process. For this reason we chose, as Mr. Vital noted, to present material primarily (but not exclusively) from the German cultural sphere because this was the arena in which the tensions and dilemmas inherent in this process are most explicit. We nowhere claim that Western European Jewry is the *only* setting or the focus of modern Jewish history. Indeed, many of the strategies devised by Western European Jewry to deal with the problems of modernity were unique, but not to the degree that Mr. Vital suggests. Nevertheless, the most salient ideological, cognitive, and institutional transformations in Jewish life in Eastern Europe, America, and Israel during the past two hundred years first emerged in Western Europe. There are, to be sure, notable exceptions. Unique to Eastern Europe are such important ideological movements as the Bund, Diaspora nationalism, and the struggle for minority rights. Our separate chapter on Eastern European Jewry illustrates these unique developments. For a variety of reasons, however, these movements failed to produce enduring forms of Jewish life beyond

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the geographical confines of Eastern Europe. Certainly with time Zionism gained great support in Eastern Europe, but it would be erroneous to overlook the seminal role of Western European Jewry in defining, leading, and shaping the movement.

The enduring ideological and institutional forms of modern Jewish life stem from the German-speaking Jewish world of the 19th and 20th centuries: denominational life characteristic of American Jewry; philanthropic and defense organizations; modern Jewish scholarship; and the very concept of a Jewish culture through the medium of a non-Jewish language, to mention but a few. Unfortunately, Mr. Vital does not consider these distinctive adaptations to modernity. Moreover, he implicitly suggests that the only viable options that were and are available to the modern Jew are either halakhic Orthodoxy or secular nationalism. As we have tried to illustrate, many other patterns emerged and endured. A more variegated view of modern Jewish life is both pedagogically and methodologically necessary, in our view.

Mr. Vital contends that the true "paradigmatic Jew" of the modern world is the Eastern European Jew who spoke Yiddish and was inclined toward secular nationalism. This seems to be a rather limited perspective. We continue to maintain that the *paradigmatic processes* of modernity took place first and most intensively in Central Europe, but that the reader and student need to understand the full spectrum of modern Jewish history. . . .

PAUL R. MENDES-FLOHR
Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Jerusalem, Israel

JEHUDA REINHARZ
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan

DAVID VITAL writes:

As I suggested in my review, the central question in Jewish historiography is (and has always been) the question of unity: is unity possible and if so, what can provide it? Is there, can there be, a core to which all or most phenomena relate (i.e., can be related by the historian) in one way or another? And if there is such a core, is it of an essentially material, or moral, or intellectual nature? Is it observable (at any rate to the historian); or is it a construct? In other words, to repeat the question I posed in my review: "What, in the case of the Jews, can replace the territorial base and the political base and the political structure that, in the final analysis, provides the core, or the centripetal force, that keeps other national histories from flying apart into social, cultural, regional, economic, and socio-ethnic pieces?"

Now it seems to me that what Messrs. Mendes-Flohr and Reinharz have chosen to do is to build around a *problem*—one, it must certainly be said, which is of great interest and importance. They have not chosen to build around, or on, basic circumstances. The boundaries they have set themselves are therefore analytical and conceptual. They are concerned with such matters as "strategies," "ideological, cognitive, and institutional transformations," "movements," "forms of life," "denominational life," "the very concept of a Jewish culture," and, of course and above all, with "distinctive adaptations to modernity."

Certainly these are all interesting topics, if only by virtue of their intricacy and their contemporary salience, notably in the United States. But theirs is a scheme with two connected drawbacks. It encapsulates certain theses about Jewry and Judaism which are both too firm and insufficiently explicit for what purports to be a general survey. And it has the effect of bringing a very particular, but only moderately-sized segment of Jewry to the fore. Thus one of the author/editors' half-stated theses is that the forms of adaptation to "modernity" practiced and taught by important elements of German Jewry and largely followed in one way or another by most of Western Jewry were successful, even commendable, and in any case consistent with Jewish survival—perhaps the only sure way of insuring it. Of course, they may be right in their judgment, and I, for my part, am inclined to think they are. But I am not inclined to think that this view of the matter is anything but debatable and highly speculative—and that it turns largely on what one means by "Jewish survival." In any event, an important consequence of their having adopted this view is that their book offers quite a close examination of a relatively small, sociologically untypical segment of Jewry and has led them to pay a great deal less attention to the vastly larger segment—the East European—that by sheer demographic weight made up the bulk of Jewry until World War II and whose character and fate have been decisive, surely, for the modern history of Jewry as a whole in virtually all of its aspects—as much in death as in life. It is as if a history of, say, Russia and/or the Russian people in modern times were cast preponderantly in terms of the Russian intelligentsia. No one would deny its vast importance; but no one, I think, would consider such a history adequate if it did not pay equal—if not greater—attention to, say, the peasantry and the church, to say nothing of the bureaucracy, even if one regarded them as objects, not subjects, doomed ultimately, losers, not victors in the march of events.

The Christmas Bombing

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

May the author of the book, *The Prestige Press and the Christmas Bombing, 1972*, about which Anthony Lewis and Charles Horner had an exchange in the June issue, have permission to comment? In their argument neither of them mentioned what is written in my book.

I think Mr. Lewis is absolutely right in his complaint that Mr. Horner's review [March] neglected to mention that South Vietnam was the first to demand changes in the armistice agreement which Kissinger negotiated with Le Duc Tho in October 1972; and I also think Mr. Horner is absolutely right in pointing out that it was hardly a crime for President Thieu to have asked for such improvements—and that it seems "bizarre," as Mr. Horner puts it, to blame the South Vietnamese victims more than the North Vietnamese aggressors.

My book makes the sequence of events completely clear. In fact, it gives several plausible reasons why the North Vietnamese had grounds for drawing back after the treaty had been renegotiated to accommodate at least a small part of the South Vietnamese concerns. But the matter does not end there. All this concerns only the introduction to my book. Mr. Lewis plays a major role in what follows.

The Christmas bombing of 1972 was a classical case of military action for political ends. The purpose was to bring the North Vietnamese back to the conference

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table and to make them accept an improved (from the South Vietnamese point of view) treaty. That purpose was brilliantly accomplished, in spite of all that the American prestige media, including Mr. Lewis, did to prevent such an outcome.

So outraged was Mr. Lewis that the U.S. was bombing the North to force it to conclude an agreement marginally better for the South, that he accused Washington of "offering the peace of the Inquisition: conformity or tormented death" (New York *Times*, December 25, 1972). Did the U.S. offer only such a cruel choice? The document, signed in January 1973, was essentially the one that the North Vietnamese had almost agreed to a month before; and the bombing was infinitely more selective, more accurate, and thus less destructive to civilian life and property than the major bombings of World War II.

As mentioned in my book, the Pentagon (in April 1973) offered photographic proof that Hanoi, whose wanton "destruction" by "carpet bombing" had been protested by the New York *Times* and Washington *Post*, was virtually intact after the bombing and that—with relatively minor exceptions—only military targets had been hit. The *Times* had the good grace to report this on its front page a month afterward; the other prestige media buried the news or spiked it altogether.

Far from being wanton and cruel, the Christmas bombing of 1972 speeded up the armistice. Contrary to Mr. Lewis's contention, we did not bomb in order to please Thieu, but in order to make the North accept an agreement that gave the South a somewhat better chance, which was also in our interest. That the armistice was later violated, and that the South did not receive the support from us that had been promised to it, is another matter.

MARTIN F. HERZ
Georgetown University
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I should like to add to Charles Horner's reply to Anthony Lewis. Mr. Lewis maintains that notwithstanding the North's invasion of the South, the attempt by South Vietnam and the United States to use the bombing to try to get a settlement acceptable to the South

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was some kind of moral outrage. Charles Horner calls this proposition "feeble and pathetic," and correctly suggests that it is prompted by Mr. Lewis's "vested interest" in the bombing debate, his need to defend a publicly and emotionally proclaimed position even after it has become clearly absurd and shameful. Mr. Lewis's desperation no doubt also accounts for his resort in the past to some fancy editing to show that the bombing did not make any difference anyway.

In the latest of his famous Christmas columns on the bombing (December 22, 1980), Mr. Lewis quoted from Henry Kissinger's summary of the changes to the October draft agreement that were made after the bombing, and claimed that even as listed by Kissinger himself such changes were "almost macabre in their triviality." But Mr. Lewis edited the quotation the way producers turn hostile theater reviews into favorable ones. The entire passage (*White House Years*, pp. 1466-67) is set out below. The materials Mr. Lewis left out are shown in italics:

The provision for our continued military support for Saigon had been expanded to permit in effect unrestricted military assistance. The phrase "administrative structure" to describe the National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord had been dropped, *underlining its essential impotence. The functions of the Council had been further reduced, by taking away from it any role in "the maintenance of the cease-fire and the preservation of peace" that had been in the earlier draft.* The Demilitarized Zone was explicitly reaffirmed *in the precise terms of the provisions that established it in the Geneva Accords. A provision had been added that the parties undertook to refrain from using Cambodia and Laos "to encroach on the sovereignty and security of one another and of other countries." This provision, aimed at the establishment of sanctuaries, was intended to reinforce the earlier one requiring the withdrawal of foreign forces. The international control machinery, now expanded to 1,160 people, was ready to begin operating on the date the agreement was signed.* A number of invidious references to the United States had been eliminated; *a few additional technical improvements were made.*

FRANKLIN HUNT
New York City

Movie Criticism

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I have just read Richard Grenier's " 'The Uniforms That Guard Us' " [May]. The man can write! My appreciation may have been heightened by my agreement on the principles, but even one who disagrees with the principles Mr. Grenier expresses would have to praise his trenchant writing.

WILLIAM D. SMITH
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

What a magnificent essay Richard Grenier presented us with in the May COMMENTARY. Mr. Grenier takes current films and illumines aspects of our lives in historical and literary context.

GERALD D. TURBOW
Beverly Hills, California

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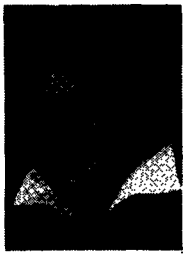

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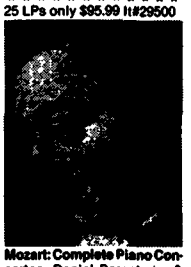

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Crooks and Clowns on TV

See the dastard. Hiss at him. See the dolt. Hoot at him. They're both businessmen, TV variety.

In the skimpy fare served up as network entertainment night after night, the business world is peopled mostly by ne'er-do-wells and nincompoops. Likely as not, businessmen and women are portrayed on the tube as schemers and lawbreakers, a la J.R. Ewing, or else they're bubbleheads bumbling about and mouthing off for laughs, in the manner of Archie Bunker.

Such are the key gleanings of a study, first of its kind ever done, looking into the way television depicts people in business. The study found that two out of every three businessmen on television come across as foolish, greedy, or evil. In the prime-time view, over half of all corporate chiefs commit illegal acts, ranging from fraud to murder. Some 45% of all business activities are shown as illicit. Only 3% of TV business people behave in ways that are socially and economically productive.

The study, titled *Crooks, Conmen and Clowns: Businessmen in TV Entertainment,* was done by The Media Institute, a Washington-based research organization that seeks to improve the level and quality of media coverage of business and economic affairs. If the institute's researchers wound up their work bug-eyed and babbling, that's understandable. They peered at 200 episodes of the top 50 series on ABC, CBS, and NBC: sitcoms, shoot-'em-ups, dramas, and the like. The sample excluded all specials, sporting events, and news programs.

Analyzing the shows' content and characters, the institute confirmed what some of us in business have long been squirming about: As pictured by the floppy-necked quiche nibblers who dream up network series, most businessmen are either blackguards or buffoons. "Businessmen on prime-time television are consistently shown in an unflattering light," The Media Institute said. "Sixty-seven percent are portrayed in a negative manner—as criminals, fools, or greedy or malevolent egotists—while only 25% are shown in a positive light."

The bigger the business, the more unfavorably its practitioners are painted. The leaders of large companies tend to be cast as out-and-out crooks, lesser executives as mere miscreants, and small businessmen as dimwits. In TV's vision of business, ethics are about as rare as rowboats in the Sahara.

Why the perverse portrayals? Leonard J. Theberge, president of The Media Institute, points out that TV entertainment adheres to a simplistic format of good versus bad. In years past, "bad" was personified by such societal stereotypes as minorities, ethnic groups, and women. Happily, such stereotypes have all but been eliminated. Still, the bad-guy slot remains to be filled. Business folks, it seems, make suitably handy villains and knuckleheads.

Theberge notes, too, the existence of "cultural reasons which might explain a bias by TV writers against businessmen. For example, it is not a new phenomenon for creative artists to look down on the commercial sector."

Two ironies obtrude. One is that the networks whose shows project businessmen as scoundrels and jesters are themselves commercial enterprises run by, yes, businessmen. The other is that the programs denigrating business are supported by advertising dollars from—you guessed it—business.

UNITED TECHNOLOGIES

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The Middle East: Carterism Without Carter?

Robert W. Tucker

ALMOST every great international crisis has its ebbs and flows. The crisis centered in the Persian Gulf is no exception to this pattern. Since the early 1970's, when the crisis broke upon us, it has been marked by sudden and unexpected shocks which are then followed by a period of outward calm and even of apparent improvement. We are in such a period today. In the summer of 1981, developments in the Gulf no longer evoke the same sense of urgency and danger that they evoked only the year before.

Yet the principal elements of a situation that gave rise to widespread apprehension in 1980 remain essentially unchanged. Nothing has happened in the intervening year to alter the precarious power balance in and around the Gulf. The disadvantageous Western military position relative to that of the Soviet Union has not changed for the better. The forces of instability within the Persian Gulf have not abated. The power vacuum that existed in the Gulf a year ago has not been filled by local power. Nor is there any greater likelihood today than there was yesterday that this vacuum can be filled by local power. The Saudi-sponsored Gulf Cooperation Council merely advertises the weakness of the forces indigenous to the lower Gulf. To find in this development the prospect of an effective security arrangement, as some observers have done, is only to grasp at straws.

The threat to vital Western interests may therefore be defined in the same terms today as it was defined yesterday. Why, then, the apparent lessening of concern? Certainly the Soviet record to date in Afghanistan cannot provide valid grounds for believing the crisis has eased. The Russians have not failed in Afghanistan. To the contrary, with a minimum of effort they have stabilized a position there that they could continue to hold indefinitely. There is no evidence that the Soviet experience in Afghanistan has sobered Moscow or has led it to entertain more modest expectations of what its military power might yet accomplish in the region.

More plausible is the view that Soviet aspirations in the Gulf have been affected by developments in Poland. Even if Russian forces could simultaneously move, if necessary, in both Eastern Europe and the Gulf, the prospect is undoubtedly such as to give Moscow the greatest pause. But although Poland probably has, for the time being, diverted Soviet attention from the Gulf, how long it will continue to do so is anyone's guess. An easing of Soviet apprehension over the course of events in Poland would return us to the situation of 1980.

In some measure, the lessening of yesterday's concern over the threat to Western interests in the Gulf must also be attributed to what has been since late 1980 a brightening oil picture for importing nations. There is no need to deal here with the factors that have given rise to the present oil glut and to the attending price weakness in the world petroleum market. Even if the view is accepted that these factors are going to have a lasting impact on oil demand, they may be expected to do so only on the all important condition that the supplies of the Persian Gulf are not again disrupted, whether by the intrusion of a hostile outside power, or by intraregional conflict, or by political instability and change of regime in a major producing country, or, finally, by a sudden change of policy by one or more major Gulf producers.

The persistence of the glut depends upon avoiding these contingencies. This much, at least, is clear. What is not clear, or what is no clearer than it was a year ago, is the prospect today of continued avoidance. The Soviet threat apart, developments within the Gulf afford no greater basis in 1981 than they did in 1980 for assuming that serious threats to access will not arise. For the conditions that characterize the politics of the Gulf today and determine the prospects for the disruption of oil supplies have not changed. The volatility of the region—its inherent instability and susceptibility to sudden political mutation—must be accepted as a given.

ROBERT W. TUCKER is professor of international relations at Johns Hopkins and the author of *A New Isolationism: Threat or Promise?*, *The Inequality of Nations*, and *The Purposes of American Power: An Essay in National Security*, which Praeger will bring out later this month. His widely-discussed articles in COMMENTARY include "American Power & the Persian Gulf" (November 1980), "Oil and American Power—Six Years Later" (September 1979), and "Behind Camp David" (November 1978). During the presidential campaign of 1980, Mr. Tucker was a member of a Reagan advisory group on foreign policy.

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IF THERE has been any significant change here, it must be seen in the increased importance accorded Saudi Arabia. Self-advertised as the engineers of the present oil glut, and widely accepted as such in the West, the Saudis have reached a new pinnacle of influence in Western, and particularly American, councils. This development can occasion a real sense of relief, however, only if it is assumed that the Saudi rulers have indeed acted with a view not only to their own interests but to Western interests as well, and that they may with some confidence be expected to continue to do so. Neither assumption is self-evident, to say the least. What is abundantly clear is that the Saudis have acted in terms of their own perceived interests and that these interests have for the time being roughly coincided with Western interests as well. (Even this judgment betrays the extent to which the once mighty have fallen. That we should be grateful to the Saudis for bringing the price of oil down from very extortionate levels to what is still an extortionate level, that we should hail this course as one of true moderation, is as indicative as perhaps anything can be of a temper and outlook which would have seemed inconceivable only a generation ago.)

Whether this coincidence of interests will persist for long is another matter. Once the Saudis have achieved a unified pricing structure within OPEC, and thereby established their mastery, they will have every incentive to sustain the present floor price of $32 per barrel and to make upward adjustments thereafter commensurate with the rate of inflation in the major importing countries. This is the most moderate course of behavior we can reasonably expect, if only because of the seemingly boundless ability of the Saudi regime to spend what appears to most of the world as an equally boundless income.

Even if the Saudi regime were genuinely disposed to moderation in relation to the West, a very large *if*, the requirements of its survival might not permit it to be moderate. And should it be suddenly swept away, a possibility that surely does not diminish with the passage of time, there is no telling what kind of governing power might emerge in its place. Despite the considerable attention now paid to Saudi Arabia by the outside world, we have only a very limited knowledge of what is going on within that country. All that we can be certain of is that the sudden infusion of unprecedented wealth has brought—indeed forced—marked change in its wake and that this change cannot but be attended by rising social and political instability. To draw any comfort, then, from a policy that is today more dependent than ever on arrangements entered into with the Saudi regime is indicative only of the straitened position to which we have been reduced. Yet this is the position which with the passage of time is increasingly accepted as normal and even inevitable.

The fact that nothing terrible has happened in the Gulf in the past year may offer the best explanation for the lessening of yesterday's concern over the threat posed there to Western interests. Even the war between Iran and Iraq, initially greeted with shudders in the West, has not—or not yet—proved injurious to a world that momentarily braced itself for the worst when the fighting began. On this occasion, a serious disruption of supplies was not followed by frantic buying and accompanying price rise but by the emergence of a glut and the steady weakening of price. So unexpectedly benign an experience was bound to have an even broader effect in dispelling a substantial number of the apprehensions which had built up by late summer of last year.

Finally, the easing of yesterday's concern may in some measure be attributed to the advent of a new administration in Washington, an administration committed to the restoration of American power and position in the world. This commitment, it is true, was not welcomed everywhere in this country and in Western Europe. On the whole, however, it was met with relief and hope—relief that an end had been put to the Carter administration foreign policy and hope that the Reagan administration would provide the occasion for the United States to assume once again a leadership role commensurate with its power. Nowhere, perhaps, had this role been so badly impaired as in the region of the Persian Gulf during the last eighteen months of Carter's tenure in office. With the exception of our defeat in Vietnam, the pathetic saga of the hostages marked a decline in American prestige as no other event in the post-World War II period. The perceived indecisiveness and sheer ineptitude that characterized the handling of the hostage crisis probably alone insured Carter's defeat at the polls.

The new administration promised a quite different foreign policy from the one pursued by its predecessors. It promised a different foreign policy generally and particularly a different policy in the Persian Gulf. The steady decline of American power and position in this area so vital to our interests would be arrested and even reversed. With the Reagan administration we would now have a new ball game to be played in the Gulf. The expectation that this will be the case persists even today. Yet after more than half a year in office the Reagan administration provokes the question: is the new game we are supposedly playing very different from the old game?

II

FROM the outset of the 1970's to the invasion of Afghanistan at the close of the decade, America's Middle East policy was marked above all by the attempt to compensate for what was plainly a declining power position. This awareness of growing vulnerability explains the emphasis placed on the Shah's Iran in the early 1970's by the Nixon administration. Iran was

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to play the role that we could not or would not play ourselves in the Persian Gulf. The Shah was to serve our purposes even while serving his own purposes. And if it soon turned out that the Shah's purposes were rather grandiose and not always in accord with American interests, this was accepted as the price we had to pay for a policy that sought to compensate for our declining power by invoking the power of others.

It was the same awareness of a growing vulnerability that provided the impetus after 1973 for our growing role as mediator in the Arab-Israeli conflict. An apparently ambitious diplomacy was rooted in the anxiety that attends a relative decline of power. The principal aim of this diplomacy was the avoidance of another Arab-Israeli conflict. Such a conflict held out the possibility of superpower confrontation, which we were determined to avoid. In addition, another round of conflict might well result in an Arab oil embargo, only this time with far more serious consequences than the 1973-74 embargo.

The new diplomatic design required for its success that the special relationship between the United States and Israel be altered. For this relationship, if maintained, could only continue to place the Arab confrontation states and their supporters at odds with Washington. Instead, the special relationship had to be turned from a liability into an asset. This could be done by demonstrating to the Arabs that Washington could help them get, through far less dangerous methods than war, what Moscow could only help them get through war.

Whereas Henry Kissinger's diplomacy of step-by-step put forth no grand design for resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict and deliberately avoided even suggesting what the eventual shape of a settlement might be, his successors came forward with the idea of a comprehensive peace. Yet the logic underlying both approaches was, at root, the same. In both, the great constraints on policy were the twin fears of confrontation with the Soviet Union and with the major Arab oil producers. In both, the special relationship of preceding years would have to be recast in favor of a more "evenhanded" approach. And in both, the effectiveness of the mediator's efforts was necessarily a function of Israel's degree of dependence on the United States, a dependence that steadily increased in the course of the 1970's.

In the hands of Kissinger's successors, this dependence gave rise to the new concept of an American guarantee to Israel. The guarantee was the means expected to remove the ultimate obstacle to a comprehensive settlement. It was, in fact, the key to such a settlement, for without the guarantee, proposals for a comprehensive settlement were vulnerable to the criticism that they would place Israel in a position where it might well be unable to defend itself. The American guarantee would thus give to Israel the security it could not get from its Arab neighbors, just as Israel was already being compensated by increased American military and economic aid for unilateral concessions it was forced to make to the Arabs.

THE Sadat initiative, leading as it eventually did to Camp David and to peace between Israel and Egypt, made possible the one solid achievement of the Carter administration. Yet this achievement came quite as much in spite of American diplomacy as because of it. Initially opposed to the clear implication of Sadat's move, the Carter administration reluctantly came to support a separate peace. In doing so, however, it not only encouraged and even forced Sadat to raise his effective price for peace with Israel; it failed to pressure any of the third parties whose support for the peace was needed if the momentum established by Camp David were to be sustained. The critical third party was of course Saudi Arabia. But Riyadh greeted the settlement with open hostility, and Washington, respectful as always of the country considered a great force for moderation in the Middle East, applied no pressure. The failure to do so insured Sadat's isolation in the Arab world while giving encouragement to those intent on circumscribing as far as possible the effects of Camp David.

Camp David provided a measure of compensation for the growing vulnerability of the American position. The Iranian revolution offset this and more. The sudden transformation of the American pillar in the Persian Gulf into a determined adversary destroyed the very basis of a decade-old policy. At the same time, it illuminated with a rare clarity the tenuous character of the connection ritually drawn between the Arab-Israeli conflict and the preservation of Western interests in the Gulf. It demonstrated as possibly no other event could that the Palestinian problem was not the key issue for the United States and that the key failure of American policy in this vital region had been the feckless search for effective substitutes for American power.

In the immediate wake of the Iranian revolution, the Carter administration nevertheless remained resistant to this demonstration. What finally moved it from a state of near paralysis was the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Even then, there was no real transformation of policy. The Carter Doctrine, while acknowledging our vital interests in the Gulf and proclaiming our determination to repel by any means necessary the attempt by an outside force to gain control of the region, did not address the threat to American interests that might arise from forces inside the Gulf. In failing to do so, it obscured what must be the central purpose of American policy in the Middle East: to preserve access to the oil supplies of the Gulf. It also raised doubt over the extent to which policy toward the states of the Gulf had changed. If the "new" policy was directed only to the Soviet

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Union, though not to the states of the Gulf, it addressed the more serious threat to access while leaving in abeyance the more likely threat to access. But this omission in turn suggested that in dealing with the more likely threat, we would continue in the ways of the recent past. The Gulf states—above all, Saudi Arabia—would have to be placated by continuing the now altogether familiar pattern of concessions.

Nor is this all. Continuing the familiar pattern of concessions not only implied that the effectiveness of the Arab threat to use the oil weapon would persist, that we would still search for a surrogate to replace Iran, and that the Arab-Israeli conflict would remain tied to our interests in the Gulf; it also implied that any effort to counter the Soviet threat would be severely circumscribed. For unless this effort were to consist almost exclusively of measures that could be taken independently of the states of the region, it evidently relied on their definition of the benefits or the liabilities incurred by increased political-military intimacy with the United States. Not unexpectedly, the Arab states in and around the Gulf defined the prospect of such intimacy largely in terms of the liabilities incurred. They continue to do so today. Their definition has in turn largely defined the dimensions of America's strategic dilemmas in the Gulf.

These considerations point to the conclusion that the Carter Doctrine was but a first and very tentative step toward a transformation of American policy. While finally acknowledging the sheer force of vital interest, the Carter administration remained to the end unwilling to break from the essential givens of past policy. The critical element of this policy, it cannot be repeated too often, was not the Soviet-American relationship, important as that has undoubtedly been, but the Arab-American relationship and, above all, the Saudi-American relationship. So long as the latter remains unchanged, the basic pattern of past policy cannot be broken.

The Carter administration gave no sign that it was ever intent on breaking it. Instead, the indications were that a second Carter administration would soon return to the ways of the past and attempt to find deliverance from danger in the Gulf by a renewed effort to achieve a solution of the Palestinian problem. If so, 1981 might have been a replay, though in much worsened circumstances, of 1977. The victory of Ronald Reagan was seen at the time to have removed this prospect and to have opened the way for inaugurating a new policy.

III

It is conventional political wisdom that campaign pledges, however often and solemnly reiterated, must be discounted as a guide to behavior in office—indeed, that to hold a political candidate to these pledges is somehow to act in bad taste. But the pledges Ronald Reagan made while a candidate generally have not been so treated. Reagan has emphasized in his brief tenure that his promises were made with the intent to fulfill them and that the public has every right to expect that he will attempt to make good on them. Certainly, he has lived up to this promise in his domestic economic program. In the field of defense and foreign affairs, he has also moved in general directions he promised while a candidate. Reagan vowed that he would act with dispatch to begin redressing the military balance, and in his first months in office he has done so. Equally, in the emerging policy outlines toward the Soviet Union, the President has moved in directions he had sketched out as a candidate.

The Reagan promises, then, were not lightly given and should not be lightly treated. What was the Republican candidate's position on Middle East policy? Clearly, he had a position, though it may be rather painful to recall it today. In essence, it was that the basic pattern of Middle East policy in the 1970's had to be broken and very nearly reversed. That policy, we have already observed, sought to compensate for American weakness either through the device of surrogate power or, increasingly, through the conciliation of the Arab states. Conciliation, in turn, required Israeli concessions to the Arab adversary in exchange for which the United States would reciprocate by measures of economic and military aid. The effectiveness of the policy was necessarily a function of Israel's degree of dependence on the United States.

Reagan's criticism of this policy was that it remained blind to elementary strategic considerations. Writing in the summer of 1979 in the Washington *Post*, he charged that ". . . American policy-makers downgrade Israel's geopolitical importance as a stabilizing force, as a deterrent to radical hegemony and as a military offset to the Soviet Union. The fall of Iran has increased Israel's value as perhaps the only remaining strategic asset in the region on which the United States can truly rely; other pro-Western states in the region, especially Saudi Arabia and the smaller Gulf kingdoms, are weak and vulnerable."* It was Israel, he declared, and Israel alone, that had the necessary qualities "to stand forth as America's trusted ally." The conclusion followed, and Reagan did not hesitate to draw it, that "only by full appreciation of the critical role the state of Israel plays in our strategic calculus can we build the foundations for thwarting Moscow's designs on territories and resources vital to our security and our national well-being."

To Reagan's predecessors, Israel had never been seen as a significant part of the solution to problems besetting Middle East policy, problems that

* "Recognizing the Israeli Asset," Washington *Post*, August 15, 1979. The quotations immediately following are also from this article.

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would have persisted in the absence of Israel. On the contrary, they had seen Israel not only as *a* problem but as *the* problem for which a solution had somehow to be found. Kissinger had devised an interim solution in step-by-step diplomacy. The Carter administration had come up with a crude and telescoped version of Kissinger's policy in the form of a comprehensive peace settlement, only to find it collapse and give way to Camp David. Throughout, however, Israel had remained the problem for American policy. Reagan proposed instead that the problem was to be found elsewhere, that it would have arisen even if Israel had never existed, and that the Jewish state should be regarded as an important part of the solution.

THE implications of Reagan's position were clearly far-reaching. If Israel were to be made an important part of the solution to Middle East problems, the link previously drawn between the Arab-Israeli conflict and American interests in the Persian Gulf would have to be markedly loosened, if not broken. An additional, and weighty, reason for unlinking the two was the recognition, in Reagan's words, that "the more critical issues dividing Arab states actually have little to do with Israel, even though the Jewish state has served as a convenient rallying point in internal Arab conflicts." On this reasoning, the Palestinian issue was of little more than marginal significance for American interests.

Beyond these implications were those dealing with the wisdom and desirability of attempting to fashion a comprehensive policy for the region as a whole. Here again, the clear implication was that such an attempt must prove futile, given the many tensions and conflicts endemic to the states of the region. Israel apart, the other states of the Middle East, and particularly the Persian Gulf, could not be relied on. If so, there was no Arab candidate to fill Iran's now-vacated place. American power would henceforth have to do in the Gulf what it had earlier sought to have others do.

The thrust of Reagan's argument was not that Israel should be substituted for Iran. Instead, it was that if Israel represented our most critical remaining strategic asset in the region, it was foolhardy to press a course of action that would have the effect of weakening this asset. What the emphasis on Israel meant was simply that the policy of attempting to buy Arab good will must prove injurious to American strategic interests if this good will could only be bought at the price of Israel's strategic viability. This was no blanket endorsement of Israeli policy. Still less was it a disavowal of Camp David. It was the recognition that a policy whose logic was one of conciliating the Arabs at the cost of Israel was futile and could only compound our weakness.

This early and deliberate statement of Reagan the candidate foreshadowed the stand taken throughout the long campaign. It explains candidate Reagan's hostile position toward the PLO and the stringent requirements he insisted must be fulfilled before the American government could even seriously consider whether the PLO represented the Palestinian Arabs. More generally, it explains the candidate's subordination of the search for further progress on the Palestinian issue to an improvement of the American position in the Persian Gulf. This position could be improved, Reagan insisted, only through the recognition that there was no substitute for Western power in the region. The nostrums of the past, all of which were intended to avoid this hard truth, would have to be abandoned once and for all. In the later stages of the campaign and in the period immediately following victory, Reagan and his principal associates began to speak of the need for an American ground presence either in or immediately adjacent to the Gulf. The limits imposed on American efforts to restore a badly eroded credibility, they intimated, would have to be broken by a more assertive position toward the Arab states.

This assessment of the Reagan promise can be overdrawn. From the outset, there was a lack of clarity with respect to policy toward the Arab states, and particularly toward Saudi Arabia. The emphasis on Israel as a strategic asset together with the downgrading of the Arab-Israeli conflict in the scale of American priorities implied the reordering of American-Arab relations. Did Reagan appreciate, though, all that this might involve? Was he ever prepared to run the risks and take the measures entailed by such reordering?

There are no clear answers to these questions. It seems that Reagan believed the Arab states—particularly Saudi Arabia—could be persuaded that the Soviet Union, not Israel, represented the major threat to their interests and, having been so persuaded, would be prepared to act accordingly. If this implied, however, that the methods of persuasion Reagan was prepared to use would resemble those of his predecessor, they could have no better result than Jimmy Carter had enjoyed.

Nor did the Reagan promise augur well for future policy if based on the belief, as it seemed to be, that the only serious threat to Western interests in the Gulf arose from the prospect of Soviet expansion. In fact, much of the erosion of Western interests in the Gulf in the 1970's had little if anything to do with the Soviet Union but had been the result of a misguided American and Western policy of appeasing the Arab states. That policy could not be corrected simply by focusing exclusively on the Soviet threat and by attempting to enlist the Arab states in an anti-Soviet alliance. In the absence of a change in policy toward the Arab states, a change that would have to be predicated above all on the reassertion of American power in the region, the effort to forge an anti-Soviet arrangement among them could only serve to accentuate their already considerable leverage over Washington. It would do so, moreover, without

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yielding any corresponding benefit. For there is no evidence to support the view that the Arab states could form an effective concert of purpose to oppose Soviet designs on the Middle East. Their many conflicts prevent the forging of such a concert of purpose, and even if it is once obtained, their collective weakness relative to the Soviet Union precludes its effectiveness.

IV

THE promised transformation of America's Middle East policy did not survive the initial weeks of the new administration. There were, it is true, a number of early signs that the promise might become reality. In one of his first interviews, President Reagan endorsed the need for an American ground presence in the Middle East, though he did not indicate where he thought troops should be stationed. "What is meant by a presence," Reagan explained, "is that we're there enough to know and for the Soviets to know that if they made a reckless move, they would be risking a confrontation with the United States."*

There were other indications that a significant shift in policy might be in the making. The Secretary of State, Alexander Haig, indicated that the new administration felt no sense of urgency with respect to the continuing negotiations on Palestinian autonomy between Egypt and Israel. At the time, Haig's apparent downgrading of the negotiations could be taken, and was taken by many, as a sign that the new administration was intent on breaking the close link formerly drawn between the Arab-Israeli conflict and the preservation of Western interests in the Gulf.

Even at this early date, however, there were also signs that the policy of the Reagan administration would betray far more continuity than change. In his confirmation hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Haig gave little indication that a significant shift in policy was in the making. If anything, the burden of his testimony suggested a general endorsement of the actions taken by the Carter administration. The Secretary-designate supported the 1978 package sale of 60 F-15's to the Saudis, though Reagan had been critical of the sale during the campaign. He was cautious in his comments on the PLO and in responding to questions on what the new administration intended to do about PLO activities in the United States. And he was vague when asked about Israel's strategic importance to this country and the expected levels of future U.S. economic and military assistance to Israel. On balance, Haig's responses to the Committee contained little if anything that could not have been endorsed by his predecessors. One thing Haig's testimony certainly was not: it was not a ringing endorsement of the positions taken by Ronald Reagan during the presidential campaign.

But then neither was there a ringing endorsement of the Reagan promise by the new Secretary of Defense. Within two weeks of the inauguration, Caspar Weinberger let it be known that the administration was anxious to comply with Saudi Arabia's request for advanced accessories for the F-15 fighter bombers. The sudden conviction that the Saudis had a genuine need for the equipment coincided with warnings from Riyadh that the Saudi government would make the issue a litmus test of its relations with the U.S. The first hint that the Reagan administration might be prepared to follow an old pattern was given by the Defense Secretary. Picking up on the President's earlier statement about the need to station American ground forces in the region, Weinberger declared that the administration would give "sympathetic" consideration to stationing American troops in Israel if a request to do so were made by the Israeli government. This was hardly what most observers had interpreted Reagan's remarks about stationing troops to mean. Weinberger confessed that he too would be surprised if the Israelis were ever to make such a request and added that although the administration would never initiate the matter, we would have to examine it if raised by our ally.

As an interpretation of the President's earlier statement, the Secretary's remarks seemed out of place. As an attempt to ease Israeli concern about its security, they followed a by now familiar path. It was the first effort, though a rather heavy-handed one, to balance concessions to the Saudis by some form of compensation to the Israelis.

Given these early portents of Middle East policy, one must seriously question the view held by some observers that the Reagan administration has since largely abandoned the promise of a policy with which it began office. Instead, it seems doubtful whether the promise of the campaign ever survived the coming to office. Reagan's statement on the need for an American ground presence is exceptional. Even that statement, however, was made in the context of other statements Reagan had not made as a candidate for high office. Now the President was committed to an "even-handed" approach, knowing full well the accepted connotations of this term when used in the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict. And now he emphasized our "moral commitment" to the state of Israel, in contrast to his previous emphasis on our strategic interest in Israel. The vocabulary of politics is almost always indicative of intention. Reagan's vocabulary began to change at a very early date.

As for other administration actions supposedly indicative of a substantial change in policy, they establish very little. The decision to put off the resumption of the Israeli-Egyptian negotiations on Palestinian autonomy did not necessarily mean that the administration had altered the former re-

* New York *Times*, February 3, 1981.

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lationship drawn between the Arab-Israeli conflict and Western interests in the Gulf. What it did clearly mean was that Washington had decided that progress in the negotiations was virtually ruled out in the period prior to the Israeli elections on June 30. Persuaded that the elections would bring the Labor alignment back to power and result in a more flexible Israeli negotiating position, the Reagan administration took a decision that might just as easily have been taken by a second Carter administration. Certainly the attitude entertained toward the Begin government, an attitude that largely prompted the decision to downgrade for the time the Palestinian negotiations, did not appear to differ materially from the attitude of the previous administration.

FROM the outset, the downgrading of the autonomy negotiations was linked to an emphasis on dealing with the Soviet threat to the Persian Gulf. Indeed, the shift in emphasis was widely seen as the distinctive contribution of the new administration to Middle East policy. In testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Secretary Haig articulated the rationale for the shift. He did so, significantly, in response to an inquiry as to whether the administration was going to get a quid pro quo from Saudi Arabia in return for the decision to sell that country enhanced equipment for the F-15's. Could the Saudis, he was asked, be induced to take a different position with regard to the peace process?

In reply, Haig spoke of the need "to establish a consensus in the strategic-regional sense among the states of the area, stretching from Pakistan in the east to Egypt in the west, including Turkey, Israel, and the other threatened states." The Saudis' refusal to enter the peace process, Haig declared, reflected the insecurities they felt, insecurities that had to be traced for the most part to the Soviet Union or its regional proxies. If these insecurities could be effectively redressed, the Saudi attitude toward the peace process might well change.*

This view was subsequently given more explicit formulation by Richard Burt, the director of the State Department's Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs. "It is our strong belief," Burt explained, "that improving the security of the region is intimately related to progress in the peace process between Israel and the Arab states. In fact, only when local states feel confident of U.S. reliability and secure against Soviet threats will they be willing to take the necessary risks for peace. It is thus important to handle the Arab-Israeli question and other regional disputes in a strategic framework that recognizes and is responsive to the larger threat of Soviet expansionism."†

The idea of a strategic consensus, or, more felicitously, of a consensus of strategic concerns, was not novel to the Reagan administration. The preceding administration had also entertained the idea, though predictably it had come to nothing. It had come to nothing because the Carter administration had sought to elicit a consensus among states that no longer placed much confidence in American reliability. By 1979-80 the time was well past when America could elicit a consensus. Before we could even hope to achieve any kind of strategic consensus among the key states of the region it was first necessary to rehabilitate ourselves in Arab eyes as a great power that would act, when necessary, to preserve its interests. A consensus of sorts could only come, if indeed it could ever come at all, through the prior reassertion of American power. But the last thing the Carter administration had in mind was imposing its will on the Arab states. Its particular version of a strategic consensus was to be understood in a literal sense. A consensus would presumably emerge from a shared concern—the Soviet threat—that would subordinate other concerns and that would eventually pave the way for America's rehabilitation in the region. Not unexpectedly, the key states of the area, particularly Saudi Arabia, gave short shrift to this last gasp of a bankrupt policy.

Did the Reagan administration's version of a strategic consensus substantially differ from that of its predecessor? By implication, at least, it appeared to do so. Administration officials spoke of setting the stage for the desired consensus by restoring American reliability and by reducing the insecurities of the local states. When placed in the broader context of the effort promised to redress the arms balance, let alone of the statements favoring the stationing of an American ground presence in or near the Gulf, the reasonable implication was that the Reagan administration was prepared to forge a consensus by methods the Carter administration had shrunk from considering. If necessary, one might have fairly assumed, the new administration was prepared to impose its will on those states—above all, the conservative monarchies of the Gulf—that could be expected to resist, while nevertheless wanting, a closer relationship with the United States.

One thing is clear. The idea of a strategic consensus either meant the determined effort to reassert American power in the region, and this whatever the initial reaction of the local states, or it meant little more than a continuation of previous policy. Of course, the argument can still be made that the idea of such a consensus was misplaced to the extent it assumed that the states of the region would subordinate their local conflicts to a common interest in meeting the Soviet threat. But it is doubtful that the administration's notion was so simple-minded as this criticism implies. For the measures that would prove necessary to provide se-

* Transcript of testimony from Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig Regarding an Overview of Foreign Assistance and State Department Authorization, March 19, 1981.

† "Middle East Regional Security," Bureau of Public Affairs, U.S. Department of State, March 23, 1981.

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curity against the Soviet threat would, it could be argued, also prove sufficient to insure against other threats as well. In the case of Saudi Arabia, the critical state in forging a strategic consensus, the measures required to afford security against the Soviet threat would also likely prove sufficient to guarantee the Saudi regime against other external, and internal, threats. In return for this security, it is not unreasonable to assume that the Saudi government would entertain a different attitude toward the peace process. Why should it not, when the results of that process could no longer be seen to threaten its existence but instead to form an indispensable condition of its security?

The Saudi rulers could be expected "to take the necessary risks for peace" only when they felt secure against Soviet threats *and* when doing so would not expose them to the vengeance of their Arab brothers, without and within. If this is what the Reagan administration had in mind, it made eminent sense. But it made sense only with the all-important proviso that the administration was ready to apply pressure on Riyadh to agree to an arrangement whereby we would be able to guarantee the Saudi regime while also being able to safeguard our other interests as well. Unfortunately, the Reagan administration has given little reason so far for believing that it is in any way prepared to fulfill this proviso. To the contrary, the record to date indicates that it is no more willing to do so than was the Carter administration.

V

SINCE April, we have seen a policy unfold that is striking only for its utter familiarity. One by one, the principal elements of the Reagan promise have given way to a policy that does not appear to differ in any material respect from past policy.

Consider the efforts of the new administration to fashion a credible military posture to defend our interests in the Persian Gulf. Though a more ambitious Rapid Deployment Force has been projected by the Reagan administration, its effectiveness in dealing with the contingencies likely to arise in the Gulf continues to be limited by the same constraints that hampered the efforts of the Carter administration. Today, the Arab states—Oman apart—appear no more disposed than they were a year ago to grant the United States anything more than the use of "facilities" in time of proven need. Nor has Washington been disposed to apply pressure to the end of obtaining regular bases for air, naval, and particularly ground forces. Having initially indicated that it would seek to break through the constraints limiting the effectiveness of American efforts to defend the Gulf, the Reagan administration quickly and unceremoniously backed away from its earlier position.

Why did it do so in the spring if it had been persuaded in the winter that regular bases and ground forces were not only desirable, but necessary? The answer cannot be that the administration was unaware that there would be local opposition to proposals for such a presence, since this opposition had already been expressed on a number of past occasions. The Carter administration had of course quickly bowed to the refusals of both Saudi Arabia and Egypt to entertain any permanent American presence. This was understandable, however, in view of the diffidence with which it undertook the task of persuading Arab states about the need for something more than facilities. Indeed, doubt must persist over whether the preceding administration was ever really intent on attempting to secure regular bases, let alone on stationing a substantial American ground force. Clearly, it had no stomach for risking any confrontation with Arab states on this issue.

The new administration had created the expectation that in this respect, as in others, it would act in a quite different manner. Yet when it met with the same refusal that the Carter administration had encountered, it retreated with no less alacrity. Whether the Saudis had even been seriously asked to consider receiving American forces on their soil is uncertain. The Egyptians presumably were asked, though there is no indication that any real pressure was applied. The answer, not unexpectedly, was "no." At the outset, the Egyptians did not even want the inclusion of American troops in a multinational Sinai peacekeeping force. Their inclusion, one high Egyptian official explained, might injure Egypt's reputation as one of the founding members of the nonaligned movement.

Perhaps this reply was a form of Egyptian humor. If so, the refusal to entertain American bases in the northern Sinai was not. The entire subject, Secretary Haig later said of his April talk with Sadat, was one of "utmost sensitivity" to the Egyptian government and to Sadat personally. At any rate, Haig did not consider the matter one of great moment since, from a military and strategic viewpoint, the bases in the northern Sinai were not judged to offer the U.S. "the desirable location we ought to seek." Thus were disposed of the two best bases in the Middle East, bases far from any center of civilian population, and bases which if held by American forces might have substantially altered the calculations of the parties most directly concerned with the Palestinian issue.

In the end, Cairo did agree to the inclusion of American troops in a multinational Sinai peacekeeping force. Sadat's "concession" to Washington was to permit a battalion of American soldiers in the Sinai, provided it was clearly understood that this was not a "smuggled force" that could form the nucleus of a United States military presence in the area. The understanding was important, both sides stressed, if other nations were to participate in the peacekeeping force. Apparently, it is as im-

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portant to Cairo and Washington that the Fiji Islanders participate in the force as it is that the United States not take, or be seen to take, any measure even suggestive of a military presence in the northern Sinai.

Thus by April of next year, when the Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai must be completed, the great bases of Eitam and Etzion will be turned over by the Israelis to the Egyptians for the latter's "civilian use." Before turning them over, the Israelis will destroy, as they are entitled to do, the complex infrastructure that required years to construct and without which the bases have but little military utility. At the same time, the Reagan administration is expected to press ahead in its effort to transform the Egyptian port of Ras Banas on the Red Sea into a usable facility to receive and support the Rapid Deployment Force. The effort will take years and cost billions. Even when completed, its use will be restricted by those conditions President Sadat has laid down to two American administrations, conditions neither administration has insisted must be relaxed.

IN ABANDONING the Sinai bases to now certain destruction, thereby ruling out the best prospect for inserting an American air and ground presence in proximity to the Gulf, the Reagan administration turned in a performance worthy of its predecessors. In its developing relationship with Saudi Arabia, the new administration may even have outbid the Carter administration. It is here, in the relationship between Washington and Riyadh, that the nature of current Middle East policy is most strikingly illuminated.

An emphasis on Riyadh in America's Middle East policy is no innovation of the Reagan administration. Particularly in the wake of the Shah's fall, Washington increasingly shifted its attention and hopes, and its readiness to defer, to Saudi Arabia. A policy of weakness had no other alternative once the Iranian pillar had disappeared. Still, the shift had not quite been fully consummated by the time Carter left office. It was left to the Reagan administration either to reverse this policy born of weakness or to continue it.

Almost from the outset, there was little doubt as to what the choice would be. It is no exaggeration to say that today Saudi Arabia holds a position in the eyes of the American government that it has never before enjoyed. Nor is it an exaggeration to say that Riyadh has come to exercise what virtually amounts to a veto on any significant American move or initiative in the region. In a perfect case of history repeating itself as farce, Saudi Arabia is becoming the new pillar of American policy. For while it was at least reasonable to believe that the Shah's Iran could act as the American surrogate—though always at very considerable price—it is simply foolish to believe that Saudi Arabia can do so. Destitute of the sinews of power save for one, surrounded on all sides by hungry wolves, increasingly dependent on foreign workers to run its economy and on foreign mercenaries to make up its armed forces, the Saudi regime is afraid of its own shadow—and not without reason.

Yet it is Saudi Arabia that has become the keystone in the arch of this administration's policy. It is Saudi Arabia that we have now come to almost as supplicants for support of American policy. And it is Saudi Arabia that will now determine whether American policy succeeds or fails in a region on which our vital interests must continue to depend for a number of years. Given so critical and exalted a position, there is scarcely a need to inquire into the reason for the increasingly intimate though one-sided relationship the Reagan administration has entertained with Riyadh. For the state that has been credited with engineering the oil glut and on whose good will and moderation the glut presumably must continue to depend, the principal reason for the intimate relationship is apparent.

This is why only the obtuse will insistently ask for a quid pro quo from Saudi Arabia in return for F-15 add-ons, AWACS, and the other military equipment the Reagan administration has agreed to sell Riyadh. For the oil glut *is* the Saudi quid pro quo, as Saudi spokesmen have not hesitated to remind us. To ask them to take a more favorable view of Camp David is, in their eyes, merely gratuitous. And not without some reason, one must add. Why should they also be asked "to take risks for peace" when the taking of such risks might well expose them to dangers against which Washington still manifests no determination to protect them?

It is against the background of continued weakness and of the persistent fostering of illusions—now centered on Saudi Arabia—that the discrete policy moves of the Reagan administration are to be understood. The conviction of weakness must account for the terror that any confrontation with Saudi Arabia, or that any internal convulsion which may destroy the pillar, holds for the administration. Its hopes are focused on that state, and if they are badly deceived all may be lost. There is no alternative, then, to concessions to Saudi Arabia, and particularly when Riyadh makes these concessions a litmus test of the relationship. Moreover, the nature of the concession, its reasonableness or unreasonableness, forms a secondary consideration. What matters is that the concession be made, in order that the Saudis remain persuaded of the benefits of the relationship and in order that other parties in the Arab world are also persuaded of these benefits.

The Saudis, in turn, are weak and vulnerable. Being so, they must respond to the importunities of others who may one day turn on them. For this reason, the appeasement of Saudi Arabia cannot be readily limited but must respond to the many concerns Riyadh nourishes. One of these concerns is of course the plight of the Palestinians. The sin-

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cerity of Saudi concern over the Palestinians is beside the point. What is relevant is that concern must be shown, and that the fate of the Palestinians be linked to the peace and stability of the entire area. If Riyadh is to soothe its constant fears about a hostile world, in the absence of a more confident and assertive America it can do no less than insist that there be progress on the Palestinian issue, and pressure Washington to this end. As for Washington, given the logic of its position, it can do no less than respond to this pressure in the only way it seems to know how. The need to mark progress on the Palestinian issue is thus above all a function of the relationship on which Washington has now banked so much and on which it is more dependent than ever. Regardless of the real merit of the connection drawn between the Palestinian issue and stability in the Gulf, Washington has no alternative but to accept the soundness of the connection so long as Saudi Arabia continues to insist upon it.

At bottom, both Washington and Riyadh are sensitive to the fragility of the arrangement in which they have invested so much. It is this awareness that has prompted both parties to search in the Gulf for other and it is hoped more solid pillars than Saudi Arabia. Earlier, this same awareness led the Carter administration to carry on a brief but abortive flirtation with Iraq. The Reagan administration apparently entertains the same hopes its predecessors did. These hopes clearly comprised a part of the motivation that prompted this administration to team up with Baghdad in the United Nations to push through the strongest condemnation yet made of Israeli behavior by the global body.

The move to censure Israel for its strike against the Iraqi nuclear reactor could have been readily vetoed had Washington only desired to do so. All that was needed was to have allowed Baghdad to submit its initial resolution calling for sanctions against Israel. Instead, the determination was made to work with Iraq and to recast the resolution in a form that would make an American veto virtually impossible. This gratuitous effort to salvage the Iraqi resolution reflected the hope that from the Israeli action might yet come a new source of support for the arrangement over which Washington and Riyadh remain so apprehensive. The episode was as revealing as anything that has happened to date of the distance the Reagan administration has moved from its initial promise.

The inevitable outcome of the logic that increasingly determines Washington's position is that Israel must again become *the* problem of American policy, rather than, as Ronald Reagan once insisted, a valuable and valued part of the solution. And this it indeed seems to have become for the Reagan administration in as emphatic a sense as it ever was for the Carter administration.

The style and tactics of the Begin government have surely facilitated this resumption of an old role. But it is sheer, and even willful, delusion to believe that with a Labor government the result would have been materially different. For a Labor government, no less than the Begin government, would have viewed with growing disquiet the policy it found emerging from the outset of the Reagan administration. And a Labor government, no less than the Begin government, would have sought to follow a course of action increasingly independent of and at odds with the policy followed by Washington. It would have done so because Washington's policy is currently moved by the same considerations that moved past policy. That the Reagan administration continues to proclaim Israel an ally and a strategic asset cannot obscure this reality of a policy which exhibits nothing so much as continuity with the policy we were led only yesterday to believe had been rejected.

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Human Rights and American Power

Samuel P. Huntington

DURING the 1960's and 1970's many intellectuals—foreign and American—expounded what can perhaps best be termed "the myth of American repression"—that is, the view that American involvement in the politics of other societies is almost invariably hostile to liberty and supportive of repression in those societies. The United States, as Hans J. Morgenthau put it in 1974, is "repression's friend": "With unfailing consistency we have since the end of World War II intervened on behalf of conservative and fascist repression against revolution and radical reform. In an age when societies are in a revolutionary or prerevolutionary stage, we have become the foremost counterrevolutionary status quo power on earth. Such a policy can only lead to moral and political disaster." His argument, like the multitudinous statements of other intellectuals supporting the myth of American repression, suffers from two basic deficiencies.

First, it confuses support for the Left with opposition to repression. In this respect, it represents another manifestation of the extent to which similarity in immediate objectives can blur the line between liberals and revolutionaries. Yet those who support "revolution and radical reform" in other countries seldom have any greater concern for liberty and human dignity than those who support "conservative and fascist repression." In fact, if it is a choice between right-wing and left-wing dictatorships, there are at least three good reasons in terms of liberty to prefer the former to the latter.

1. The suppression of liberty in right-wing authoritarian regimes is almost always less pervasive than it is in left-wing totalitarian ones. In the 1960's and 1970's, for instance, infringements of human rights in South Korea received extensive coverage in the American media, in part because there were in South Korea journalists, church groups, intellectuals, and opposition political leaders who could call attention to those infringements. The absence of comparable reports about the infringements of human rights in North Korea was evidence not of the absence of repression in that country but of its totality.

2. Right-wing dictatorships are, the record shows, less permanent than left-wing dictatorships; Portugal, Spain, and Greece are but three examples of right-wing dictatorships that were replaced by democratic regimes. Despite the hopeful movement toward pluralism in Poland, as of 1981 no Communist system had been replaced by a democratic regime.

3. As a result of the global competition between the United States and the Soviet Union, right-wing regimes are normally more susceptible to American and other Western influence than left-wing dictatorships, and such influence is overwhelmingly on the side of liberty. Soviet influence, on the other hand, is invariably and powerfully exerted—as happened twice in Czechoslovakia—on the side of repression.

This last point goes to the other central fallacy of the myth of American repression as elaborated by Morgenthau and others. Their picture of the world of the 1960's and 1970's was dominated by the image of an America that was overwhelmingly powerful and overwhelmingly repressive. In effect, they held an updated belief in the "illusion of American omnipotence" that attributed the evil in other societies to the machinations of the Pentagon, the CIA, and American business. Their image of America was, however, defective in both dimensions. During the 1960's and 1970's American power relative to that of other governments and societies declined significantly. By the mid-70's the ability of the United States to influence what was going on in other societies was but a pale shadow of what it had been a quarter-century earlier.

When American power had an effect on other societies, however, it generally was to further liberty, pluralism, and democracy. The United States is, in practice, the freest, most liberal, most demo-

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cratic country in the world, with far better institutionalized protections for the rights of its citizens than any other society. As a consequence, any increase in the power or influence of the United States in world affairs generally results—not inevitably, but far more often than not—in the promotion of liberty and human rights in the world. The expansion of American power is not synonymous with the expansion of liberty, but a significant correlation exists between the rise and fall of American power in the world and the rise and fall of liberty and democracy in the world.

THE single biggest extension of democratic liberties in the history of the world came at the end of World War II, when stable democratic regimes were inaugurated in the defeated Axis countries: Germany, Japan, Italy, and—as a former part of Germany—Austria. In the early 1980's these countries had a population of over 200 million, and included the third and fourth largest economies in the world. The imposition of democracy on these countries was almost entirely the work of the United States. In Germany and Japan, in particular, the United States government played a major role in designing democratic institutions. As a result of American determination and power, the former Axis countries were, as John D. Montgomery put it, "forced to be free."

Conversely, the modest steps taken toward democracy and liberty in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary were quickly reversed, and Stalinist repression instituted, once it became clear that the United States was not able to project its power into Eastern Europe. If World War II had ended in something less than total victory, or if the United States had played a less significant role in bringing about that victory (as was, indeed, the case east of the Elbe), these transitions to democracy in Central Europe and Eastern Asia would not have occurred. But—with the partial exception of South Korea—where American armies marched, democracy followed in their train.

The stability of democracy in these countries during the quarter-century after World War II reflected, in large part, the extent to which the institutions and practices imposed by the United States found a favorable social and political climate in which to take root. The continued American political, economic, and military presence in Western Europe and Eastern Asia was, however, also indispensable to this democratic success. At any time after World War II the withdrawal of American military guarantees and military forces from these areas would have had a most unsettling and perhaps devastating effect on the future of democracy in Central Europe and Japan.

In the early years of the cold war, American influence was employed to insure the continuation of democratic government in Italy and to promote free elections in Greece. In both cases, the United States had twin interests in the domestic politics of these countries: to create a system of stable democratic government and to insure the exclusion of Communist parties from power. Since in both cases the Communist parties did not have the support of a majority of the population, the problem of what to do if a party committed to abolishing democracy were to gain power through democratic means was happily avoided. With American support, democracy survived in Italy and was sustained for a time in Greece. In addition, the American victory in World War II provided the stimulus in Turkey for one of the rarest events in political history: the peaceful self-transformation of an authoritarian, one-party system into a democratic, competitive party system.

IN LATIN AMERICA, the rise and fall of democratic regimes also coincided with the rise and fall of American influence. In the second and third decades of this century, American intervention in Nicaragua, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic produced the freest elections and the most open political competition in the history of those countries. There, as in other countries in Central America and the Caribbean, American influence in support of free elections was usually exerted in response to the protests of opposition groups against the repressive actions of their own governments, and as a result of American fears that revolution or civil war would occur if significant political and social forces were denied equal opportunity to participate in the political process. The American aim, as Theodore Wright made clear in his comprehensive study, *American Support of Free Elections Abroad*, was to "promote political stability by supporting free elections" rather than strengthening military dictatorships.

Thus in its interventions in eight Caribbean and Central American countries between 1900 and 1933, the United States acted on the assumption that "the only way both to prevent revolutions and to determine whether they are justified if they do break out, is to guarantee free elections." In Cuba, the effect of the Platt Amendment and American interventions was, in the words of Jorge I. Dominguez, "to pluralize the Cuban political system" by fostering "the rise and entrenchment of opposition groups" and by multiplying "the sources of political power so that no single group, not even the government, could impose its will on society or the economy for very long. . . . The spirit and practice of liberalism—competitive and unregulated political, economic, religious, and social life—overwhelmed a pluralized Cuba." The interventions by United States Marines in Haiti, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, and elsewhere in these years often bore striking resemblances to the interventions by federal marshals in

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the conduct of elections in the American South in the 1960's: registering voters, protecting against electoral violence, insuring a free vote and an honest count.

Direct intervention by the American government in Central America and the Caribbean came to at least a temporary end in the early 1930's. Without exception, the result was a shift in the direction of more dictatorial regimes. It had taken American power to impose even the most modest aspects of democracy in these societies. When American intervention ended, democracy ended. For the Caribbean and Central America, the era of the Good Neighbor was also the era of the bad tyrant. The efforts of the United States to be the former gave a variety of unsavory local characters —Trujillo, Somoza, Batista—the opportunity to be the latter.

AMERICAN attention was primarily directed toward Europe and Asia in the years immediately after World War II. Latin America was, by and large, neglected. This situation began to change toward the late 1950's, and it dramatically shifted after Castro's seizure of power in Cuba. In the early 1960's Latin America became the focus of large-scale economic-aid programs, military training and assistance programs, propaganda efforts, and repeated attention by the President and other high-level American officials. Under the Alliance for Progress, American power was to be used to promote and sustain democratic government and greater social equity in the rest of the Western Hemisphere. This high point in the exercise of United States power in Latin America coincided with the high point of democracy in Latin America. This period witnessed, in Tad Szulc's phrase, "the twilight of the tyrants": it was the age in which at one point all but one of the ten South American countries (Paraguay) had some semblance of democratic government.

Obviously, the greater prevalence of democratic regimes during these years was not exclusively a product of United States policy and power. Yet the United States certainly played a role. The democratic governments that had emerged in Colombia and Venezuela in the late 1950's were carefully nurtured with money and praise. Strenuous efforts were made to head off the attempts of both left-wing guerrillas and right-wing military officers to overthrow Betancourt in Venezuela and to insure the orderly transition to an elected successor for the first time in the history of that country. After thirty years in which (to quote Jerome Slater) "the U.S. government was less interested and involved in Dominican affairs" than at any other time in history—a period coinciding with Trujillo's domination of the Dominican Republic —American opposition to that dictator slowly mounted in the late 1950's. Following his assassination in 1961, "the United States engaged in the most massive intervention in the internal affairs of a Latin American state since the inauguration of the Good Neighbor policy." The United States prevented a comeback by Trujillo family members, launched programs to promote economic and social welfare, and acted to insure democratic liberties and competitive elections. The latter, held in December 1962, resulted in the election of Juan Bosch as president. When the military moved against Bosch the following year, American officials first tried to head off the coup, and then, after its success, attempted to induce the junta to return quickly to constitutional procedures. But by that point, writes Abraham F. Lowenthal, American "leverage and influence [with the new government] were severely limited," and the only concession the United States was able to exact in return for recognition was a promise that elections would be held in 1965.

Following the military coup in Peru in July 1962, the United States was able to use its power more effectively to bring about a return to democratic government. The American ambassador was recalled; diplomatic relations were suspended; and $81 million in aid was cancelled. Nine other Latin American countries were induced to break relations with the military junta—an achievement that could only have been possible at a time when the United States seemed to be poised on the brink of dispensing billions of dollars of largesse about the continent. The result was that new elections were held the following year, and Belaunde was freely chosen president. Six years later, however, when Belaunde was overthrown by a coup, the United States was in no position to reverse the coup or even to prevent the military government that came to power from nationalizing major property holdings of American nationals. The power and the will that had been there in the early 1960's had evaporated by the late 1960's, and with them the possibility of holding Peru to a democratic path.

Through a somewhat more complex process, a decline in the American role also led eventually to similar results in Chile. In the 1964 Chilean elections, the United States exerted all the influence it could on behalf of Eduardo Frei and made a significant and possibly decisive contribution to his defeat of Salvador Allende. In the 1970 election the American government did not make any comparable effort to defeat Allende, who won the popular election by a narrow margin. At that point, the United States tried to induce the Chilean congress to refuse to confirm his victory and tried to promote a military coup to prevent him from taking office. Both these efforts violated the norms of Chilean politics as well as of American morality, and both were unsuccessful. If, on the other hand, the United States had been as active in the popular election of 1970 as it had been in that of 1964, Allende might well have been defeated

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again, and the destruction of Chilean democracy in 1973 thus avoided.

All in all, the decline in the role of the United States in Latin America in the late 1960's and early 1970's coincided with the spread of authoritarian regimes in that area. With this decline went a decline in the standards of democratic morality and human rights which the United States could attempt to apply to the governments of the region. In the early 1960's in Latin America (as in the 1910's and 1920's in the Caribbean and Central America), the goal of the United States was democratic competition and free elections. By the mid-1970's, that goal had been lowered from the fostering of democratic government to attempting to induce authoritarian governments not to infringe too blatantly the rights of their citizens.

A SIMILAR relationship between American power and democratic government prevailed in Asia. There, too, the peak of American power was reached in the early and mid-1960's, and there, too, the decline in this power was followed by a decline in democracy and liberty.

American influence had been most pervasive in the Philippines, which, for a quarter-century after World War II, had the most open, democratic system, apart from Japan, in East and Southeast Asia. After the admittedly fraudulent election of 1949 and in the face of the rising threat to the Philippine government posed by the Huk insurgency, American military and economic assistance were greatly increased. Direct American intervention in Philippine politics then played a decisive role not only in promoting Ramon Magsaysay into the presidency but also in insuring that the 1951 congressional elections and 1953 presidential election were open and honest elections. In the next three elections the Philippines met the sternest test of democracy: incumbent presidents were defeated for reelection.

In subsequent years, however, the American presence and American influence in the Philippines declined, and with them went support for Philippine democracy. When President Marcos instituted his martial-law regime in 1972, American influence in Southeast Asia was clearly on the wane, and the United States held few effective levers with which to affect the course of Philippine politics.

In perhaps even more direct fashion, the high point of democracy and political liberty in Vietnam also coincided with the high point of American influence there. The only free national election in the history of that country took place in 1967, when the American military intervention was at its peak. In Vietnam, as in Latin America, American intervention had a pluralizing effect on politics, limiting the government and encouraging and strengthening its political opposition. The defeat of the United States in Vietnam and the exclusion of American power from Indochina were followed in three countries by the imposition of regimes of virtually total repression.

The American relationship with South Korea took a similar course. In the late 1940's, under the sponsorship of the United States-UN-observed elections inaugurated the government of the Republic of Korea and brought Synghman Rhee to power. During the Korean war (1950-53) and then in the mid-1950's, when American economic assistance was at its peak, a moderately democratic system was maintained, despite the fact that South Korea was almost literally in a state of siege. In 1956, Rhee won reelection by a close margin and the opposition party won the vice-presidency and swept the urban centers.

In the late 1950's, however, as American economic assistance to Korea declined, the Rhee regime swung in an increasingly authoritarian direction. The 1969 vice-presidential election was blatantly fraudulent; students and others protested vigorously; and, as the army sat on the sidelines, Synghman Rhee was forced out of power. A democratic regime under John M. Chang came into office, but found it difficult to exercise authority and to maintain order. In May 1961, this regime was overthrown by a military coup, despite the strong endorsement of the Chang government by the American embassy and military command.

During the next two years, the United States exerted sustained pressure on the military government to hold elections and return power to a civilian regime. A bitter struggle took place within the military over this issue; in the end, President Park, with American backing and support, overcame the opposition within the military junta, and reasonably open elections were held in October 1963, in which Park was elected president with a 43-percent plurality of the vote. In the struggle with the hard-line groups in the military, A.M. Rosenthal of the New York *Times* observed, "the prestige and word of the United States have been put to a grinding test"; by insisting on the holding of elections, however, the United States "emerged from this stage of the crisis with a sort of stunned respect from South Koreans for its determination—from those who eagerly backed United States pressures on the military regime and even from officers who were vehemently opposed to it."

Thirteen years later, however, the United States was no longer in a position to have the same impact on Korean politics. "You can't talk pure Jefferson to these guys," one American official said. "You've got to have a threat of some kind or they won't listen. . . . There aren't many levers left to pull around here. We just try to keep the civil-rights issue before the eyes of Korean authorities on all levels and hope it has some effect."

By 1980, American power in Korea had been

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reduced to the point where there was no question, as there was in 1961 and 1962, of pressuring a new military leadership to hold prompt and fair elections. The issue was simply whether the United States had enough influence to induce the Korean government not to execute Korea's leading opposition political figure, Kim Dae Jung, and even with respect to that, one Korean official observed, "the United States has no leverage." Over the years, as American influence in Korea went down, repression in Korea went up.

THE positive impact of American power on liberty in other societies is in part the result of the conscious choices by Presidents such as Kennedy and Carter to give high priority to the promotion of democracy and human rights. Even without such conscious choice, however, the presence or exercise of American power in a foreign area usually has a similar thrust. The nature of the United States leaves it no alternative but to stand out among nations as the proponent of liberty and democracy.

Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. American power is no exception; clearly it can be and has been used for good purposes and bad in terms of liberty, democracy, and human rights. But also in terms of these values, American power is far less likely to be misused or corrupted than the power of any other major government.

This is so for two reasons. First, because American leaders and decision-makers are, inevitably, the products of their culture, they are themselves generally committed to liberal and democratic values. This does not mean that some leaders may not at times take actions that run counter to those values. Obviously, this happens: sensibilities are dulled, perceived security needs may dictate other actions, expediency prevails, the immediate end justifies setting aside the larger purpose. But American policy-makers are more likely than those of any other country to be sensitive to these trade-offs and to be more reluctant to sacrifice liberal-democratic values.

Second, the institutional pluralism and dispersion of power in the American political system impose constraints—unmatched in any other society—on the ability of officials to abuse power, and also insure that those transgressions that do occur will almost inevitably become public knowledge. The American press is extraordinarily free, strong, and vigorous in its exposure of bad policies and corrupt officials. The American Congress has powers of investigation, legislation, and financial control unequaled by any other national legislature. The ability of American officials to violate the values of their society is therefore highly limited, and the extent to which the press is filled with accounts of how officials have violated those values is evidence not that such behavior is more widespread than it is in other societies but that it is less tolerated than in other societies. The belief that the United States can do no wrong in terms of the values of liberty and democracy is clearly as erroneous abroad as it is at home. But so also is the belief—far more prevalent in American intellectual circles in the 1970's—that the United States could never do right in terms of those values. American power is far more likely to be used to support those values than to counter them, and it is far more likely to be employed in their behalf than is the power of any other major country.

The point is often made that there is a direct relation between the health of liberty in the United States and the health of liberty in other societies. Disease in one is likely to infect the other. Thus, on the one hand, Richard H. Ullman argues that "the quality of political life in the United States is indeed affected by the quality of political life in other societies. The extinction of political liberties in Chile, or their extension in Portugal or Czechoslovakia, has a subtle but nonetheless important effect on political liberties within the United States." Conversely, he also goes on to say: "Just as the level of political freedom in other societies affects our own society, so the quality of our own political life has an important impact abroad." This particular point is often elaborated into what is sometimes referred to as the "clean hands" doctrine—that the United States cannot effectively promote liberty in other countries so long as there are significant violations of liberty within its borders. Let the United States rely on the power of example and "first put our house in order," as Stanley Hoffmann has phrased it. "Like charity, well-ordered crusades begin at home."*

Both these arguments—that of the corrupting environment and that of the shining example—contain partial truths. By an observable measure, the state of liberty in countries like Chile or Czechoslovakia has, in itself, no impact on the state of liberty in the United States. Similarly, foreigners usually recognize what Americans tend to forget—that the United States is indeed the most open, free, and democratic society in the world. Hence, any particular improvement in the state of liberty in the United States is unlikely to be seen as having much relevance to their societies. Yet these arguments do achieve greater validity when one additional variable is added to the equation. This element is power.

The impact that the state of liberty in other societies has on liberty in the United States depends upon the power of those other societies and their ability to exercise that power with respect to the United States. What happens in

* Richard H. Ullman, "Washington versus Wilson," *Foreign Policy*, Winter 1975/76; Stanley Hoffmann, "No Choice, No Illusions," *Foreign Policy*, Winter 1976/77.

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Chile or even Czechoslovakia does not affect the state of liberty in the United States because they are small, weak, and distant countries. But the disappearance of liberty in Britain or France or Japan would have consequences for the health of liberty in the United States, because they are large and important countries intimately involved with the United States.

Conversely, the impact of the state of liberty in the United States on other societies depends not upon changes in American liberty (which foreigners will, inevitably, view as marginal), but rather upon the power and immediacy of the United States in relation to the country in question. The power of example works only when it is an example of power. If the United States plays a strong, confident, preeminent role on the world stage, other nations will be impressed by its power and will attempt to emulate its liberty in the belief that liberty may be the source of power.

This point was made quite persuasively in 1946 by Turkey's future premier, Adnan Menderes, in explaining why his country had to shift to democracy:

> The difficulties encountered during the war years uncovered and showed the weak points created by the one-party system in the structure of the country. The hope in the miracles of [the] one-party system vanished, as the one-party system countries were defeated everywhere. Thus, the one-party mentality was destroyed in the turmoil of blood and fire of World War II. No country can remain unaffected by the great international events and the contemporary dominating ideological currents. This influence was felt in our country too.

In short, no one copies a loser.

THE future of liberty in the world is thus intimately linked to the future of American power. Yet paradoxically—and erroneously—proponents of very differing views concerning American foreign-policy relations have often united in seeing a conflict between the two, interpreting American involvement in the world as the outcome of the conflicting pulls of national interest and power, on the one hand, and political morality and principles, on the other. Shortly after World War II, there emerged a significant group of writers and thinkers, including Reinhold Niebuhr, George Kennan, Walter Lippmann, Hans J. Morgenthau, and Robert Osgood, who expounded a "new realism." They criticized what they called the moralistic, legalistic, utopian, and Wilsonian approaches which they claimed had previously prevailed in the conduct of American foreign relations. This new realism reached its apotheosis in the central role played by the balance of power in the theory and practice of Henry Kissinger. In the 1970's, however, the new realism came to be challenged by the "new moralism," and the pendulum that had swung in one direction after World War II now swung far over to the other side.

This shift was one of the most significant consequences of Vietnam, Watergate, and the democratic surge and creedal passion that dominated American politics in the 1960's. It represented the displacement onto the external world of the moralism that had been earlier directed inward against American institutions. The new moralism manifested itself first in congressional action, with the addition to the foreign-assistance act of Title IX in 1966 and human-rights conditions in the early 1970's, and then in the 1976 election when Jimmy Carter vigorously criticized President Ford for believing "that there is little room for morality in foreign affairs, and that we must put self-interest above principle." As President, Carter moved human rights to a central position in American foreign relations.

The lines between the moralists and the realists were thus clearly drawn, but on one point they were agreed: they both believed that the conflict between morality and self-interest, or ideals and realism, was a real one. The truth, however, is that while in some respects the conflict is real, in others, particularly when formulated in terms of a conflict between liberty and power, it is not. So defined, the dichotomy does not reflect an accurate understanding of the real choices confronting American policy-makers in dealing with the external world. Yet the double thrust of the new moralism was, paradoxically, to advocate the expansion of global liberty, and, simultaneously, to effect a reduction in American power.

The relative decline in American power in the 1970's had many sources. One of them assuredly was the democratic surge (of which the new moralism was one element) in the United States in the 1960's and early 1970's. The strong recommitment to democratic, liberal, and populist values that occurred during these years eventually generated efforts to limit, constrain, and reduce American military, political, and economic power abroad. The intense and sustained attacks by the media, by intellectuals, and by Congressmen on the military establishment, intelligence agencies, diplomatic officials, and political leadership of the United States inevitably had that effect. Imbued with the myth of American repression, the new moralists, without seeing the contradiction, welcomed the end of American hegemony in the Western Hemisphere and, at the same time, deplored the intensification of repression in Latin America.

It is also paradoxical that in the 1970's those Congressmen who were most insistent on the need to promote human rights abroad were often most active in reducing the American power that could help achieve that result. In key votes in the 94th Congress, for instance, 132 Congressmen consist-

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ently voted in favor of human-rights amendments to foreign-aid legislation. Seventy-eight of those 132 Representatives also consistently voted against a larger military establishment, and another 28 consistent supporters of human rights split their votes on the military establishment. Only 26 of the 132 Congressmen consistently voted in favor of both human rights and the military power whose development could help make those rights a reality.

The new realism of the 1940's and 1950's coincided with the expansion of American power in the world and the resulting expansion of American-sponsored liberty and democracy in the world. The new moralism of the early 1970's coincided with the relative decline in American power and the concomitant erosion of liberty and democracy around the globe. By limiting American power, the new moralism promoted that decline. In some measure, too, the new moralism was a consequence of the decline. The new moralism's concern with human rights throughout the world clearly reflected the erosion in global liberty and democratic values about the world.

Paradoxically, the United States thus became more preoccupied with ways of defending human rights as its power to promote human rights diminished. Enactment of Title IX to the foreign-assistance act in 1966, a major congressional effort to promote democratic values abroad, came at the midpoint in the steady decline in American foreign-economic assistance. Similarly, the various human-rights restrictions that Congress wrote into the foreign-assistance acts in the 1970's coincided with the general replacement of military aid by military sales.

When American power was clearly predominant, such legislative provisions and caveats were superfluous: no Harkin amendment was necessary to convey the message of the superiority of liberty. The message was there for all to see in the troop deployments, carrier task forces, foreign-aid spending, and intelligence operatives. When these faded from the scene, in order to promote liberty and human rights Congress found it necessary to write more and more explicit conditions and requirements into legislation. These legislative provisions were, in effect, an effort to compensate for the decline of American power. In terms of protecting liberty abroad, they were no substitute for the presence of American power. The reconstitution of that power—political, economic, military—can only have positive effects on the state of liberty and democracy around the world.

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CBS vs. Defense

Joshua Muravchik and John E. Haynes

THIS PAST June CBS-TV News broadcast "an unprecedented documentary project, more ambitious than any CBS News has undertaken," entitled *The Defense of the United States*. The series ran for an hour of prime time on each of five consecutive nights. So pleased was CBS with its product that it took the unusual step of rebroadcasting the entire series in August.

The series' anchorman, Dan Rather, termed it "the most important documentary project of the decade." The reviewers agreed, the Washington *Post* hailing the series as "the first documentary epic in TV history," *Time* calling it "not only the longest and most expensive network documentary ever but perhaps the most thoughtful and incisive TV examination of the American military as well," and the *Economist* (London) solemnly allowing that "CBS has shown that American television, when freed from the crass commercialism which dominates so much of its output, is a match for anyone."

Official CBS spokesmen described the series as "balanced," "fair," "accurate," and maintained that it expressed no point of view. Its executive producer, Howard Stringer, qualified this somewhat by acknowledging that the broadcasts "did draw some conclusions." These conclusions were expressed by the *Christian Science Monitor* (which also lauded the series as "masterly," "skillful," and "thoughtful"):

> If the series has one overwhelming message, it is the one that emerges time and time again throughout each segment but is finally verbalized in the concluding segment. . . . "You can't buy peace simply by spending more and more on arms."

This jibes with statements by people connected with the show itself. Thus, Howard Stringer told the *Christian Science Monitor* that "We want to stimulate a debate which . . . [CBS News President] Bill Leonard felt had never been started. . . . Here we were and are about to embark on this colossal defense spending spree with few questions asked and very little debate." The theme was echoed by Dan Rather who said: "We were about to make the largest peacetime commitment to defense in our history without much debate." Rather hoped the series would "start the debate rolling in every town and city in America." According to Stringer, so much money is being spent on U.S. nuclear forces because not enough people are standing up to say "Now, wait a minute!" The problem, Stringer told *TV Guide*, is that "somehow the opposition just isn't doing its job."

CBS's "message" was not lost on partisans in the defense debate. The staunchly pro-military American Security Council wrote to demand air time for a rebuttal to the series. Others, considerably less "hard-line," were also put off by the series. In an essay in the Washington *Star*, John Kester, who served as special assistant to Secretary of Defense Brown in the Carter administration, wrote that CBS had provided an example of "the least honest and most seductive" of the efforts of "the old anti-defense crowd" to "offer a different set of explanations to support an answer that has hardly changed at all: that money spent on defense is wasted."

On the other side of the defense debate there were cheers. The *Christian Science Monitor* observed that while "militant individuals . . . may find good reason to object to this series . . . anybody searching for serious peaceful solutions to the world's problems will welcome [this] innovative use of the public airwaves." The *Village Voice* columnist Alexander Cockburn exulted:

> The mass media are beginning to swing [against defense spending]. After seven years of almost total silence, we may soon see a return to . . . grim descriptions of cost-overrun scandals and other depredations of the milit-ind-cplx [*sic*]. Next week . . . CBS is airing a five-part series . . . which should sober people up in fairly short order.

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If it is clear that CBS, despite its perfunctory denials, *was* presenting a point of view, it is also clear that that point of view is rather far from the mainstream of the U.S. defense debate.

The series opened with a film of Ronald Reagan delivering a campaign speech. He is saying:

> It is time for us to start a build-up, and it is time for us to build that to the point that no other nation on this earth will ever dare raise a hand against us, and in this way we will preserve world peace.

The exact same segment was repeated in the final program of the series. The message was clear: it is Reagan's build-up that prompted CBS's "questions." Yet the point of view adopted by CBS was almost as distant from that of the Carter administration as it was from the Reagan administration. There is much less difference between the mainstream of the Democratic and the Republican parties today on defense issues than there is between CBS and the bipartisan defense consensus which has emerged on Capitol Hill.

This discrepancy is what explains CBS's astounding assertion that there has been "no debate" on defense issues when in fact the last few years have been a time of unusually intense discussion. In 1979, the Carter administration's quest for ratification of its SALT II agreement occasioned an unprecedented debate on U.S. defense policy. (By contrast, in 1972, the SALT I agreements were approved by votes of 88-2 amid, in the words of the *Congressional Quarterly*, "little controversy.") Throughout 1980, foreign policy, including defense concerns, was named second only to the economy by voters asked to list the most important problem facing the country. Indeed, for a few months early in 1980 foreign policy surpassed the economy as the number-one issue. These survey results should have been known to CBS: the polls that reported them were CBS News polls. Moreover, it was not a secret that the heart of the 1980 Carter reelection strategy was to question the wisdom of Reagan's views on defense issues.

When confronted with these facts, Stringer has justified the assertion that "there wasn't much of a debate" in the presidential campaign on the grounds that the differences between Carter and Reagan were small. "Both presidential candidates last year were enthusiastically endorsing increased defense spending," said Stringer to the *Christian Science Monitor*—thereby suggesting as well the distance between CBS and the center of the defense debate in the U.S.

AN INDICATION of CBS's slant can be gained from noting whom it selected as advisers and interviewees for the series. In the dramatic opening-night program, on strategic nuclear weapons, the longest interview was a joint one with Dr. Jack Geiger, identified only as a professor of medicine at CCNY, and Dr. Kosta Tsipis, identified as a professor of physics of MIT. The two professors expostulated in exquisite detail on the horrors of nuclear war, with Dan Rather confiding that "both men worked with us on preparing the film you have just seen" of a simulated nuclear attack on Omaha, Nebraska. After the discussion of the environmental and health effects of nuclear war, Rather asked Geiger and Tsipis whether the Soviet Union believes it can fight and win a nuclear war. Both men explained their strongly held convictions that Soviet leaders do not believe this.

One may wonder what qualified these two men of science to comment on Soviet military policy. Apparently CBS felt that their views were worthy of air time because the two are not merely scientists but are also active in the "peace movement," a biographical datum which CBS withheld from its viewers. Tsipis is a member of the board of directors of SANE and is an editorial adviser and prolific contributor to the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* (in its November 1976 issue he offered this analysis of why the arms race is so intractable: "The Soviet Union appears to base national security on equality in strategic weapons with the United States, while the United States feels secure only when superior"). Geiger is active in Physicians for Social Responsibility and in International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, a group consisting primarily of American, British, and Soviet doctors working, so they have announced, to inform their respective governments about the horrors of nuclear war. The group's first conference was featured in the June-July 1981 issue of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, which included an article by Geiger and a lead photograph of conference participant Georgi Arbatov. (Arbatov is the head of the Soviet Institue of the USA and Canada. His expertise in the field of medicine was, until the conference, one of Moscow's best-kept secrets.)

Another interviewee who, like Tsipis and Geiger, was not fully identified by CBS was Roger Molander. Molander expounded on the superfluity of weapons in the U.S. strategic arsenal. He was introduced by CBS as someone who had served in the Nixon, Ford, and Carter administrations (all true), but what CBS did not mention was Molander's current occupation as executive director of Ground Zero, a new coalition of liberal, church, and peace groups organized to resist a build-up of U.S. strategic forces. Curiously, the CBS segment on strategic nuclear weapons was titled *Ground Zero*.

Another person who figured in the series was Walter Pincus, listed in the credits as "adviser." Pincus works both for CBS and for the Washington *Post*. In 1977 Pincus's "advocacy journalism" in the pages of the *Post* helped to stimulate oppo-

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sition to the Carter administration's plans to deploy neutron weapons.

The most revealing glimpse of the series' general attitude was afforded by its choice of a label for the process of arms procurement, the subject of the fourth episode and in many ways the heart of the series. Said CBS's Richard Threlkeld at the beginning of the show: "The Pentagon is the military part of the military-industrial complex, better known as the Iron Triangle: . . . the Pentagon . . . the Congress . . . the defense contractors." The term "Iron Triangle," it turns out, was not coined by CBS but is the title of a book officially released the very week of the CBS broadcast by a group called the Council on Economic Priorities. The book's author, Gordon Adams, is president of the board of the Corporate Data Exchange, a New Left research organization. The book was financed, according to its acknowledgments, by, among others, Stewart Mott and the Samuel Rubin Foundation, the latter being a principal source of support for a variety of New Left causes.

The Council on Economic Priorities was not the only beneficiary of Stewart Mott and the Rubin Foundation on which CBS appears to have relied as a resource. The Center for Defense Information (CDI), a project of the Fund for Peace which receives support from both Mott and Rubin, is a group which works to stimulate congressional opposition to virtually all new U.S. weapons programs and to persuade Congress that "the U.S. needs a more realistic view of the Soviet Union than the obsessive one that has dominated U.S. foreign policy for many years." Last year CDI issued a report purporting to demonstrate that Soviet influence in the world has reached a new low. CBS not only repeated this theme, but backed it up with the same erroneous data used by CDI.

Of course not everyone put on the air by CBS was of the same political stripe. The series included interviews with defense specialist Jeffrey Record, a non-dove, and with Senator Gary Hart (D-Colo.), a former dove, but both Record and Hart were questioned exclusively on issues on which they disagree with the defense establishment. There was also a good deal of footage of military brass, but much of this had the same quality as the Reagan footage—to serve as a foil for CBS's biting critiques. In case any viewer misunderstood how the thoughts of military spokesmen ought to be regarded, CBS's interviewer Bob Schieffer spelled it out for them: "No general or admiral is ever likely to say enough is enough."

THE insistent ideological slant which informed CBS's presentation led it to make many erroneous or distorted assertions, but the most important error was one of omission. In five hours given to examining the plans for a U.S. military build-up, there was no mention—*none*—of the Soviet build-up which precipitated it.

The Soviet build-up was discovered long before the election of Ronald Reagan. The annual report of the Defense Department, delivered by Secretary of Defense Harold Brown in early 1980, gave the authoritative view of the Carter administration:

> Whether the two defense efforts are measured in the U.S. or the Soviet economy, the general direction of the Soviet programs in real terms is the same—upward. . . . As far as we can tell, the effort accounts for 11 to 14 percent of the Soviet GNP, although some experts put it at 15 percent or higher. Relative to the United States, the Soviet defense effort now appears to be about 50 percent higher measured in dollars, and around 30 percent more measured in rubles. . . .
>
> Even more impressive than the growth in the overall defense budget is the expansion in the investment that has gone into research . . . , procurement, and military construction. [Such] . . . investments . . . exceed those of the United States by about 85 percent. . . . We had hoped that well-balanced, secure, second-strike strategic nuclear forces would satisfy the security needs of the Soviet leaders in that area. They have gone well beyond such a capability, however. . . . They appear, indeed, to be aiming toward some sort of war-winning capability with these forces, however futile that attempt may be.

But the facts of the Soviet build-up, clear as they were to the Carter administration, as well as to its successor, were lost on CBS. Or if CBS was aware of them, it spared its viewers the painful news.

Often CBS seemed to be trying to prevent any hint of the Soviet build-up from slipping out. More than once the network told its viewers that the U.S. has more nuclear warheads than does the Soviet Union, but other measures of nuclear strength, which are at least as important as numbers of warheads and in which the Soviet arsenal has far surpassed that of the U.S., were not mentioned at all. CBS referred to the "giant" MX missile without ever noting that it will only be about as large as "small" Soviet ICBM's and not nearly the size of the large ones.

The dramatic highlight of the series was a simulation (on which CBS spent $100,000 for special effects) of the detonation of "one 15-megaton bomb" on Omaha, Nebraska. The American Security Council protested that CBS's scenario was implausible: a 15-megaton bomb is a real monster, and the Soviets would never expend one that size just to destroy SAC headquarters at Omaha. But CBS officials insisted that the Soviet arsenal does indeed contain at least a few warheads of that size. This is probably true. What went unmentioned in all this was the megatonage of *American* missiles; CBS never told its viewers that there is nothing nearly the size of 15 megatons in the U.S. arsenal. The submarine-based weapons which, as CBS pointed out, provide the U.S. with its most relia-

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ble retaliatory power are one three-hundredth that size.

It was not merely by such omissions that CBS sought to spare its viewers the news of the Soviet build-up. "The largest peacetime military budget in our history" is being rationalized, Dan Rather noted skeptically, by reference to "an enemy who, we're told, is stronger and more dangerous than ever." But CBS suggested that what "we're told" is not always true, and the series presented information to show why—information which in many instances was false.

The Soviet submarine fleet is the largest in the world; but Walter Cronkite implied that there is little need for the U.S. to worry about it, since "their submarines are plagued by ports that are frozen-in most of the year." In fact, the major Soviet bases on the Kola and Kamchatka peninsula provide year-'round facilities. Years ago the Soviet surface navy was equipped and structured to conduct short-range operations in the Baltic and North Seas. In the last decade, however, the Soviet Union has built large surface combatants and aircraft carriers which now enable the Russians to fight on any ocean and deliver military power to any continent. This naval build-up disturbs some Americans, "but," said Cronkite reassuringly, "only 10 percent of these ships are ever actually out at sea." One would be better assured if Cronkite could guarantee that in the event of war the Soviets would only use 10 percent of their fleet.

The USSR has an armed force of 4.8 million, and a mandatory draft which requires of all young men two years of military training with further years in reserve units. The United States has an armed force of 2.1 million volunteers, and most American young men never receive a day of military training. CBS, however, listed Russian military personnel at 3.5 million, which was roughly accurate as of fifteen years ago, before the Soviet build-up began. Again Cronkite had reassuring news. Of the Soviet forces, "half-a-million men . . . are trained as border guards or construction workers." He did not mention that Soviet border troops are equipped as infantry with automatic weapons, armored vehicles, light artillery, and combat aircraft. (During World War II the Soviet Union used its border troops and internal security troops as regular combat formations of the Red Army.) Soviet military "construction workers" are the equivalent of the U.S. Army's engineer battalions, or the Seabees. Construction troops are military assets, not a uniformed job corps.

Just as the figure for the size of the Soviet armed forces was fifteen years out of date, so too was CBS's information on the quality of Soviet military equipment. In the segment about weapons procurement, correspondent Richard Threlkeld delivered this statement without qualification or substantiation:

> Naturally, there's a lot we don't know about Soviet weapons, but what evidence there is seems to indicate that their weapons really aren't all that sophisticated—certainly not as sophisticated as ours. . . . In war planes, as in warships and tanks and the rest of their hardware, the Russians still seem to be going for quantity over quality.

The truth is that the Russians have been going for both quantity and quality, and that the once-solid U.S. lead in quality has dissipated. According to a special report to the Congress in 1978 from the Carter administration's Undersecretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, William J. Perry, of thirty-three principal categories of military technology the U.S. led in eighteen, the Soviets led in twelve, and three were too close to call.

Toward the end of the series, Walter Cronkite sought to blow away the entire specter of the Soviet build-up with one great pontification:

> As for the military spending, the figures are also misleading. Our two systems, our two economies, are so different that to compare the costs of tanks and rocket launchers is just about as meaningful as comparing the costs of a college education.

In truth, the military-spending figures are not misleading precisely because they do not naively "compare the costs of tanks and rocket launchers." The standard, nonclassified analyses of Soviet military spending which are published from time to time by the CIA and other government agencies give two sets of figures. One set attempts to gauge how much actual money or value, as a proportion of GNP, the Soviets are devoting to their military. The second set is not concerned with how much they actually spend, but rather with how much they are *buying*. This set is calculated by adding up all their tanks, rocket launchers, etc. (as best we can count them), and estimating what it would cost to buy these in dollars.

The first set of figures helps us to learn about Soviet priorities, and is ordinarily calculated in rubles. The second set of figures tells us how large their forces are, or how fast their stockpiles are growing, as compared with our own. From the first set we have learned that the Soviets spend from 11 to 15 percent of their GNP on the military. The U.S. spends 5 percent. From the second set we have learned that their annual defense effort in recent years has been about 50 percent larger than ours. If this latter comparison is misleading in any way, it is in *understating* the Soviet advantage (because it is an aggregate figure—the Russians spend a much larger proportion of the total on hardware and a much smaller on amenities for personnel than we do).

In addition to denouncing the comparisons of Soviet and American defense spending as mislead-

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ing, CBS took another step to make sure that viewers were not alarmed by them; it did not show them. At no point in the five-hour documentary did CBS allow viewers to see or hear the figures Cronkite criticized.

If it ignored the Soviet build-up, CBS did not entirely ignore the Soviet Union. The fifth and final show was entitled, *The Russians*. It began with film clips counterposing President Reagan, making a speech about the Soviets, with President Brezhnev, making a speech (presumably) about the United States. Then entered Walter Cronkite, like a long-suffering parent of quarrelsome children. He lamented "the voices coming out of the Kremlin and the White House today," with their "angry words about American warmongering and Soviet threats and dire intentions." This set the theme for the rest of the hour, filmed with Cronkite in Moscow, where he discovered that the Russians are people just like us. At one point viewers saw footage of U.S. Air Force "Red Flag" exercises, in which American airmen practice against other Americans imitating Russian tactics. Said Cronkite:

> The Air Force created the Red Flag exercise to train against Soviet aggression. The Soviet Union sees Red Flag as proof of American aggression. They look at each other in the same mirror and each side sees what it wants to see.

How can this mirror-image symmetry be reconciled with the Soviet emphasis on military power and the glorification of military service which is altogether absent in the United States? Cronkite explained that the answer can be found in "World War II. The moral to the Russians . . . is simple: We must arm ourselves now to protect ourselves in the future." Cronkite did not explain why self-protection requires arming with overwhelmingly offensive weapons.

The "mirror" metaphor broke down entirely when CBS showed footage of the Soviet military parading through Red Square before the assembled Soviet leadership. Cronkite remarked, "You can see in this film an awesome commitment to tanks and rocket launchers, or you can see a typical military parade that lasts about twenty minutes. Take your pick." There was little doubt about which view Cronkite took. But one wonders what CBS would think or say if President Reagan held a nationally televised military parade, complete with masses of tanks and missiles, in front of the White House.

Elsewhere in Moscow Cronkite interviewed a Soviet general, Mikhail Milshtein. General Milshtein said that today there is military "parity" between the Soviet Union and the United States, but that this is endangered by "some people in the United States" who "are trying to get . . . military superiority." Such superiority, said Milshtein, "is impossible" and "only leads to the arms race" which is "very dangerous." Milshtein also asserted that "nuclear war is impossible," but he was worried because in the United States there has been some "very dangerous . . . propaganda of the possibility of such a war."

Cronkite may or may not have believed all this, but he never challenged Milshtein or evinced the least bit of skepticism, despite the fact that almost everything Milshtein said contradicts published official Soviet military doctrine, which contends that the USSR must be prepared to fight and win a nuclear war.* Nor did Cronkite fully identify Milshtein to his viewers. He introduced him only as "a member of the GRU, Soviet military intelligence, and a leading officer in the Soviet army for almost forty years." But according to the CIA's non-classified directory of Soviet officialdom, Milshtein has been retired from active duty for more than a decade and is employed by the Soviet Institute of the USA and Canada, a fact which CBS knew. This Institute, according to Western intelligence sources, is partially run by the KGB and its job is to gather information about North America and to disseminate disinformation to it. CBS viewers were never told that the Soviet "general" whose peace-loving words they heard has the job not of helping to make Soviet military strategy but of helping to deceive the West about what that strategy is.

To conclude its show about *The Russians* CBS had Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger making the case for the Soviet Union as an expansionist power, and gave a fleeting glance at a map Weinberger was using to illustrate his point. Cronkite noted: "You can get yourself pretty frightened looking at all of the administration's maps and charts of Soviet aggression and military spending. But like so many of our perceptions of the Soviet Union, it tells you only half the story, the half the administration uses to press its case for higher and higher defense budgets." He added: "Since 1960, Soviet influence around the world actually has declined. Their so-called gains, like Afghanistan and Angola, take on a different perspective, particularly when they're measured against losses, like Egypt and China."

Although CBS did not allow viewers to examine Weinberger's map, it did give a close-up of two CBS lists of twelve nations each, one showing Soviet gains and one showing Soviet losses since 1960. In addition to the "so-called gains" of Angola and Afghanistan, CBS listed Cambodia, Congo, Cuba, Ethiopia, Laos, Libya, Mozambique, Syria, South Yemen, and Vietnam as countries where the Russians have gained influence since

* See Richard Pipes, "Why the Soviet Union Thinks It Could Fight & Win a Nuclear War," COMMENTARY, July 1977.

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1960. Soviet losses were listed as Albania, Algeria, Bangladesh, China, Egypt, Ghana, Guinea, Indonesia, Mali, Somalia, Sudan, and North Yemen.

Both lists are in substantial error, understating Russian gains and overstating losses. (The lists repeat most of the same errors of omission and commission that can be found in lists published by the Center for Defense Information.) Since 1960 the Soviet Union has increased its influence in Benin (which officially declared itself "Marxist-Leninist" in 1974), Nicaragua, Grenada, Chad, and Guyana. Bangledesh, inexplicably listed with Soviet losses, probably does not belong on either side of the ledger but certainly cannot be seen as an instance of Soviet loss since 1960. Similarly with North Yemen, whose twisted path since 1960 has most recently come to the point of an understanding with South Yemen, a firm Soviet ally, that the two nations merge at some future date. It may be difficult to see much Soviet gain in this, but it is even more difficult to see how it can be interpreted as a setback.

CBS listed Egypt as a "loss" of Soviet influence. This is accurate, although it should be noted that the Soviet Union never had a significant influence over internal Egyptian politics even in the days of its close military relationship (ended by Sadat in 1972). However, if Egypt is a Soviet loss then India should be listed as a Soviet gain. The Soviet Union is now India's major supplier of arms; in 1971 India signed a treaty of friendship and cooperation with the Russians; and India cooperates diplomatically with the Soviet Union and has urged accommodation to Russia's occupation of Afghanistan and Vietnam's occupation of Cambodia. (As in the case of Egypt, India's international diplomatic cooperation with Russia is not paralleled by a significant Communist influence in domestic politics.)

Cronkite closed the program by returning to his opening theme:

> Who are these Russians? What are their intentions? No one can say with certainty. But if their perception of America is as flawed as we believe it is, then our perceptions of the Soviet Union could be flawed, too. In the absence of any real dialogue, the same old fears and doubts continue to dominate our relations.

The lesson: we have nothing to fear from the Russians but our own fear of them. This lesson certainly was not lost on the Washington *Post*, which ran an enthusiastic review under the headline: "The Soviet 'Threat.' "

IF THE Russians are people just like us, if there is no Soviet threat, if there has been no Soviet build-up, then what motivates American defense planners? The answer, CBS implied, without ever quite saying, is a "Dr. Strangelove" complex. The subtitle of that 1960's movie, *How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*, was echoed by CBS correspondent Bob Schieffer the first night on the air:

> More disturbing, perhaps, is the ease with which strategists talk about first strike. Limited nuclear war has made the horror of a nuclear exchange seem somehow manageable, even commonplace. That suggests we have finally learned to live with the bomb.

Strategists, needless to say, are people whose job it is to keep us safe from nuclear war by assuring our ability to deter it. If they talk about it with ease, this is more likely to issue from familiarity than from indifference to the possibility of millions of deaths. What would CBS make of the fact that oncologists talk with ease about cancer? In any event, CBS apparently could not actually find a strategist who exhibited the requisite callousness; instead it aired an interview with two young crew members at a missile site. Schieffer: "It must be an enormous responsibility . . . to be in charge, as you two gentlemen are, of the most powerful weapon . . . man has ever devised." One crewman: "Yes, sir, it is a definite challenge. It's more responsibility than I could obtain in a civilian world. And to me this is job satisfaction." What was the point of all this, if not to evoke echoes of Dr. Strangelove? The two young men are not in fact "in charge" of anything but certain technical chores.

The Dr. Strangelove image pervaded the series. A segment about tactical nuclear weapons began with Harry Reasoner showing a U.S. tactical medium-range missile, and observing, "Some say a device like this might start World War III." Some may say it, but the only one of note who does so is President Brezhnev in his campaign to keep NATO from matching the Soviet build-up of theater nuclear weapons in Europe. The idea that the United States would launch World War III is in itself both baseless and insulting; the idea that the U.S. would launch World War III by firing off its small, inaccurate tactical nuclear weapons is preposterous.

In discussing tactical nuclear weapons, Reasoner stated gratuitously: "With U.S. tactical weapons, radiation is what the army calls the 'main killer mechanism.' " This sounds ghoulish—which may be why it was included—but CBS did not bother to explain that this "mechanism" renders the weapons not more lethal but more accurate, making it possible to avoid casualties to innocent civilians while firing at enemy forces.

In discussing the need for an airplane to replace America's aging B-52, Bob Schieffer observed: "It does not take long to discover every Air Force general's favorite force deficiency." Discussing arms procurement, Richard Threlkeld said: "There is a constant plea from the Pentagon: we need more money because we don't have enough warplanes,

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enough of all sorts of weapons." And there was more in this vein, all illustrating the persistence with which CBS sought to project the image of a perverse, even dangerous, military mentality guiding our defense establishment.

IN WHAT direction is this mentality leading us now that we have a President willing to lend himself to its purposes? Dan Rather, summarizing three points on which he hoped the series would "stimulate debate," suggested the direction in which CBS believed we might be heading: toward self-fulfilling plans to fight a limited strategic nuclear war with the Russians; toward a European strategy which will require us to destroy Europe in order to save it; and toward exhausting our national treasure on useless and unnecessary new weapons. CBS devoted one evening to each of these three themes.

In the evening devoted to strategic nuclear weapons CBS sought to discredit concern with the Soviet Union's growing first-strike capability. Bob Schieffer stated that "when the President worries about a first strike, does that mean we are vulnerable now or that we have lost our nuclear clout? No, says the Navy's director of Strategic and Theater Nuclear Warfare, Admiral Powell Carter, not by a long shot." Admiral Carter was then shown stating that the United States could today absorb a Russian first strike and still retaliate.

Admiral Carter is correct, but he was answering a loaded question. The Russians are on the verge of becoming technically able to destroy most of our ICBM's and many of our bombers and submarines in a first strike. That would still leave the United States with the ability to retaliate with many submarine-based missiles, but this is a rather thin margin of safety which could disappear in the event of a technological breakthrough in anti-submarine warfare. Defense planners are seeking to close this so-called "window of vulnerability" as quickly as possible. At the same time, decisions being made in the Congress and executive branch in the next year or so will shape the U.S. nuclear arsenal for the late 1980's and 1990's.

CBS denigrated proposals to develop new strategic weapons on the grounds that today "if the Soviets did attack and destroy most of our land-based missiles and bombers, they would still have to take into account those 25 American subs loaded with 400 missiles carrying 3,000 nuclear warheads." Most of these warheads are carried on Poseidon missiles carried on our 31 Poseidon submarines. Each submarine carries 16 missiles, and each missile carries a MIRV tip with 10 warheads. In contrast, our older Polaris submarines, of which we still have 10 on duty, carry missiles with shorter range, less accuracy, and only one warhead on each missile.

At the time the Poseidon submarines and missiles were being developed, the decision to build them was strongly attacked by American doves. They argued, correctly, that the existing Polaris submarines and missiles were sufficient to deter the Soviet threat as it stood in the late 1960's and early 1970's; in essence, they made the same argument as Schieffer today. Yet if the governments of the 1960's and early 1970's had accepted this logic and refused to build the Poseidon submarine and missile, the United States would now stand exposed to Russian nuclear blackmail, just as it may in a few years if steps are not taken today to modernize our arsenal for the future.

In keeping with its belief that the two superpowers present mirror images of each other, CBS offered this account of U.S. and Soviet nuclear history:

> In the beginning of the nuclear age, we had overwhelming superiority, and we wanted to keep it at that. But the Russians don't trust us any more than we trust them, so these hydra-headed monsters have continued to multiply and the arms race continues—a race with no finish line.

It is simply not true, however, that the United States "wanted to keep it that way." Indeed, if we have been racing so hard one wonders how the technologically backward Russians have managed to overtake us in this vital field. The answer is that only the Russians have been racing, as Albert Wohlstetter has so convincingly demonstrated.*

Beginning in the Kennedy administration, the view took hold that the United States would be better off if it allowed the Soviets to catch up with us in strategic nuclear weapons. As then Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara told Stewart Alsop in 1962, the chances for keeping nuclear war limited would improve "when *both* sides have a sure second-strike capability." In keeping with this notion, the U.S. in the mid-60's leveled off the size of its nuclear arsenal and waited for the Russians to catch up and then do likewise. Instead, they surged ahead in a way that caught us by surprise and compelled U.S. officials to accept a numerical Soviet advantage in the 1972 SALT I agreement. As Kissinger said in Moscow at the time SALT I was concluded: "If you project the existing building programs of the Soviet Union into the future . . . you will get a more correct clue to why we believe that [this] is a good agreement."

CBS ignored all of this history, which conflicts with its idea that the Americans and Russians are just like each other. Thus Cronkite posed the question: "What if the United States tried to wipe out the Soviet Union's land-based missiles in an American first strike?" The question was left unanswered, leaving the viewer

* "Racing Forward or Ambling Back?" in *Defending America* (Basic Books, 1977).

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with the impression that this is a genuine worry for Moscow. CBS might have told its viewers that for twenty years, encompassing the darkest years of the cold war, when U.S. nuclear superiority was so great that such a worry would have been far more plausible than it is today, no attack came, which suggests strongly that the United States is politically and culturally incapable of launching a surprise nuclear attack.

But even if this inference were wrong, even if the United States were in the hands of the Dr. Strangeloves, the fact remains—again, a fact which CBS did not convey to its viewers—that the United States *does not have* the capacity to launch a successful first strike. Even the building of the MX missile would not give us that capacity. America's nuclear forces are equipped and structured to maximize their ability to survive a Russian first strike, not to launch an American first strike. Thus the emphasis on submarines and bombers, both of which are good for retaliation and useless for a first strike. Only accurate ICBM warheads are useful for a first strike, but the United States has not built enough of these to destroy Soviet retaliatory forces on the ground.

The exact reverse obtains for the Soviets, who have built enough ICBM's to destroy U.S. retaliatory forces on the ground. Now, it is true that ICBM's are not only the most threatening nuclear weapons, they are also the most open to attack. CBS implied that by putting "almost all their strategic eggs in the missile silos," the Soviets have left themselves vulnerable. But CBS did not stop to ponder its own implications. Would the Soviets have done what they have done if they fear us as much as CBS suggests they do? If, as Cronkite would have it, the Soviet effort is motivated by an obsession with self-defense grounded in memories of World War II, logic would demand that they invest in secure retaliatory forces which can serve as a deterrent, not in the one kind of weapon which simultaneously threatens and invites a first strike.

IN ANOTHER segment CBS turned its attention to the problems of tactical nuclear warfare in Europe. The message of this program was that the use of such weapons by NATO would have the effect of "destroying Europe in order to save it." The basic scenario was set by Harry Reasoner, who said:

> The specter of Soviet tanks rolling through Western Europe has haunted the West for thirty years. The Army insists it must be able to stop such an attack with battlefield nuclear weapons.

The problem with this, explained Reasoner, is that "they don't have to miss by much to hit a civilian target. . . . If you look at a map of Europe, the way things are crowded together, doesn't that make fighting a nuclear war almost impossible?"

The problem which CBS devoted the entire hour to examining is precisely the one which neutron weapons were proposed to remedy. They would be small and precise enough—so it is hoped—to be able to thwart an advancing Warsaw Pact tank column without destroying the neighboring village or killing civilian inhabitants. Yet at no time during the program did CBS mention the Carter administration's efforts to deploy neutron weapons in Europe.

More importantly, it is just not true that "the Army insists" it must use tactical nuclear weapons. Rather, it insists either that its conventional forces be strengthened to the point where they could defend against what is today the superior conventional might of the Warsaw Pact, or else that tactical nuclear weapons be used as an "equalizer" to compensate for our weakness in conventional forces. Given the choice, the Army would almost surely prefer the conventional option, as indeed it should. Now that the Warsaw Pact has developed immense theater nuclear forces, it makes no military sense for NATO to initiate theater nuclear war in order to blunt a conventional Warsaw Pact attack.

But all of these considerations were lost on CBS. After spending one whole program debunking NATO's theater nuclear weapons, in the next program CBS ridiculed efforts to strengthen NATO's conventional capabilities. Correspondent Ed Bradley:

> In Europe, the line between East and West hasn't moved in twenty-six years and we could find no one who thought the Warsaw Pact would invade. Even so, the Reagan administration wants to pour enough money into NATO to fight a long-term conventional war—a scenario that most strategists we talked to considered the least likely.

Of course, the reason strategists consider a long-term conventional war in Europe to be an unlikely scenario is that, in the absence of force improvements, NATO could not stave off a Soviet attack for very long.

PERHAPS the very heart of the whole series was the program about U.S. weapons procurement, titled *The War Machine*. The point of this program was stated at the outset by Dan Rather: "Never before in our history have so many of our weapons been behind schedule, over budget, out of order." How did CBS calculate this startling statistic? When asked, CBS press spokesman Peter Goodman said he did not know. Executive Producer Howard Stringer also did not know. Producer Craig Leake failed to respond to a telephone inquiry.

It was in this program that CBS delivered its basic message. "Do our weapons really make us strong?" asked Richard Threlkeld. Then

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he answered himself: "That depends on how you define national security." The "conventional wisdom" is that they do, but "a growing number of economists argue just the opposite." Defense spending, they say, will destroy the economy. Threlkeld left little doubt about which side CBS believed was right, though he was constrained from saying so plainly. Instead, he offered this "middle-ground" conclusion: if we do increase defense spending, "it's a sacrifice that will require perfect faith that our government is spending that money wisely on weapons we really need for the sake of national security."

This seems rather an exacting standard. Indeed, one might wonder whether it is conceivable in a democratic system that the public will have "perfect faith" in *any* major government program. But measured against this standard, the U.S. weapons-procurement process, as portrayed by CBS, is pure slapstick comedy.

This process, said CBS in the language it borrowed from the book of that name, is dominated by the "Iron Triangle"—defense officials, contractors, and Congressmen. "The Iron Triangle," Richard Threlkeld asserted, "is obsessed with procurement—getting exactly the new hardware it wants and as much of it as it can." It "is not only a closed world, it's incestuous to a degree." Presumably the military brass are obsessed with more weapons because it is their nature to be so obsessed. As for the contractors, they are after profit. And the Congressmen "like to take new weapons contracts home to their districts."

The Iron Triangle is an updated version of the "military-industrial complex," and CBS showed a film clip of President Eisenhower's farewell address in which he coined that term. Yet an examination of Eisenhower's speech shows that in it he was not warning about the problems of weapons procurement but about the dangers to the survival of liberty that he saw in an amalgam of public and private power. In the same breath Eisenhower warned that federal support for scientific research was creating a similar menace in the form of a "scientific-technological elite." CBS also did not think to broadcast the description of Communism which Eisenhower offered in that speech: "A hostile ideology—global in scope, atheistic in character, ruthless in purpose, and insidious in method."

The military-industrial complex was a favorite villain of the 1960's, but as an analytic construct it had a fatal flaw: it ignored the fact that every weapon bought must be authorized by Congress. To make the construct sound more plausible, it has been expanded to include Congress; hence, the Iron Triangle. But the veneer of plausibility is superficial. Richard Threlkeld, speaking from Capitol Hill, made this assertion:

> The men in uniform come over here from the Pentagon to ask for more money for their weapons. They know Congressmen and Senators like to take new weapon contracts home to their districts, so it's all very polite. You don't hear many hard questions.

IN TRUTH, during the 1960's and 1970's, Congress not only asked hard questions, it also slashed away at military spending. Every year the Senate and House Armed Services Committees and the Defense Appropriations Subcommittees went over the defense budget item by item. Prior to the Carter years, the Armed Services Committees cut Pentagon budget requests year after year. In 1976, the Senate committee cut the request for funds for the MX by 39 percent and completely deleted a Navy request for a nuclear-powered strike cruiser, while the House committee cut the Navy cruise-missile program by 40 percent. In 1975 the House committee cut funds for AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control System) aircraft by 50 percent and demanded certification from the Secretary of Defense himself that the AWACS had passed certain additional tests before even the money that remained could be spent. The Senate committee that year also voted to delay work on the B-1 bomber, a step which helped make possible the eventual cancellation of the bomber by President Carter. In 1974 the House committee halved the request for AWACS and cut advanced-ballistic-missile defense research by nearly 30 percent, while the Senate committee cut Navy shipbuilding funds by nearly 20 percent. At the same time, the Senate committee's report scolded the Pentagon, saying that "the committee must again stress, as it has in the past three years, its concern that the escalating cost of weapons systems and manpower is keeping the defense budget at a constantly high level." In 1973 the Senate cut the Navy's F-14 aircraft request by 73 percent and the Air Force's B-1 by 22 percent, while the House voted major cuts in funding for the F-15 aircraft, ship construction, and the anti-ballistic missile. The House committee also held hearings to investigate cost overruns in weapons.

One could go on, but the point is this: the foregoing is a sample of what the *hawks* on Capitol Hill did. The two Armed Services Committees were chaired during those years by Senator John Stennis and Representative Edward F. Hebert. In each of these years the dovish minority on the two committees—which included Representatives Les Aspin, Patricia Schroeder, and Michael Harrington, and Senators Stuart Symington and John Culver—pushed dozens of additional budget cuts which were not adopted in committee. Every year they filed dissenting views; often they carried these fights to the floor of the House or Senate where sometimes they won.

Thus, CBS's claim of a "closed society," and an "Iron Triangle" where "you don't hear many hard questions," is blatantly false about the last

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decade. Is it true of today, with Reagan in the White House and the hawks in their glory? For several years the Pentagon has been drawing up plans for a major new project called the NAVSTAR Global Positioning System. This project would put 18 navigation satellites into space, build a huge ground-control station, and procure a host of user equipment for the military services. The total project would cost around $8 billion with thousands of contractors in nearly every state in the nation receiving a part of the action and every military service getting to use the new equipment. NAVSTAR is the perfect project for CBS's Iron Triangle. However, in acting earlier this year on the FY 1982 defense budget, the House Armed Services Committee said "the NAVSTAR Global Positioning System is more of a 'nice to have' than an 'essential' military support system" and cancelled the entire project, all $8 billion worth.

Nor was the NAVSTAR cancellation unique. The Army requested funds to develop a new generation of anti-tank rockets called the Infantry Man Portable Anti-Armor Weapons System. The House committee said it "does not believe the Army can afford to proceed with the $500 million IMAAWS program and recommends that the program be terminated." The Air Force wanted funds to start a new generation of jet fighters. The House committee, citing the potential for improvements in the existing F-15's and F-16's, said "it has not been demonstrated that the development of a prototype aircraft is necessary at this time or even affordable in view of other Air Force requirements"; the committee then denied the request for funds. The Air Force also asked for $60 million to continue development of the Low Altitude Airfield Attack Weapon, a project with potential procurement costs in the hundreds of millions of dollars. The House committee said it was "concerned about the very significant cost growth that has occurred in the program. Accordingly the committee recommends that the . . . program not be reinitiated and denies the Air Force request." The Navy requested $121 million to design a new class of ships, called the DDG-X ship. No doubt the shipyards of the Iron Triangle were eagerly awaiting the billions that would be spent building these vessels, but the House committee called the plans for the ship, a new destroyer type, "not capable of meeting the threat" and cancelled the entire project.

In all, the House Armed Services Committee cancelled (not just reduced) all funding for 31 separate weapons projects whose collective potential procurement costs were in the many tens of billions of dollars.

Threlkeld's assertion that "you don't hear many hard questions" about weapons on Capitol Hill, that "a new weapons system is rarely cancelled," and that "the procurement system gives every weapon a life of its own, regardless of what's happening out in the field" is so contrary to the truth that it might seem just a mistake on CBS's part. Yet this falsehood is essential to the entire structure of CBS's argument that U.S. weapons procurement is divorced from any sober assessment of genuine defense needs.

Pursuing this theme, CBS said that Congressman Thomas P. O'Neill and Senator Edward M. Kennedy support the Navy's F-18 fighter because parts of it are built in Massachusetts. Then Threlkeld added: "Others, too, said they liked the plane, which is not unusual when you consider that parts from the F-18 come from 20,000 companies scattered among 44 states." Congressmen do of course often favor federal projects in their districts, but if a project is divided among 44 states the effect is likely to be the opposite of what CBS implied: rather than giving everybody a vested interest, diffusion gives almost nobody a strong interest. Moreover, CBS was wrong in a larger sense: defense dollars are spent in every state and congressional district, but despite the omnipresent vested interest thus created, Congress cut proposed spending every year from FY 1968 until FY 1979 for a total cut of approximately $42 billion.

The example on which CBS erected its caricature of the procurement process was the F-18, an aircraft about which the show reached a harsh judgment. In the course of the series the F-18 was called "a crippled plane," "a flying frying pan," and "a turkey." And CBS stated that its aim was to prevent "whatever comes after the F-18 [from being] more of the same." Although some responsible defense analysts have questioned the wisdom of the F-18 on grounds of cost or technology, there were several things wrong with CBS's treatment of the topic.

First, the final answer is not yet in on the F-18 and will not be for several years. The plane is just out of development and entering production. As with most new weapons systems, it is experiencing teething problems. CBS was certain that the problems could not be solved. But the Navy, the Armed Services Committees of Congress, and most defense analysts believe that the problems are only the normal ones of a new jet fighter. CBS is safe from any immediate refutation because it will be several years before anyone can know for certain. The network would have been on surer ground had it picked one of the thousands of weapons systems that have passed through the entire cycle of design, development, and procurement over the last thirty years so that the success or failure of the weapon could be objectively evaluated. If it had unearthed a weapon as disgraceful as it claimed the F-18 to be, CBS would have come up with a major scandal. In fact it is rare for the weapons-procurement system to produce "a turkey." Those

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projects that develop serious problems are usually dropped before they reach the point of mass procurement.

Second, CBS said that "in all the years the Iron Triangle was preoccupied with the how of the F-18," nobody asked "why our weapons cost so much." In fact, in the FY 1977 defense bill the House Armed Services Committee cut F-18 funding by 15 percent, explaining in its report that it was "not convinced that the Navy is developing this plane at the lowest possible cost." Just this year, in a supplemental appropriations bill, the Senate Appropriations Committee denied a Navy request for an additional $95 million for the F-18 with the comment that before more funds are authorized "the few remaining technical problems should be resolved."

Third, CBS implied that much money could be saved by adopting the strategy sponsored by Senator Gary Hart of building smaller aircraft carriers equipped with Harrier vertical take-off planes rather than more large carriers equipped with F-18's. But Hart's proposal is to build a great many more small carriers than we would build large carriers. As he explained last year: "Significantly larger numbers of aircraft carriers" are "vital for effective support of diplomacy. The increasing problems facing us in the Third World suggest we . . . need a sizable force of light carriers." Harriers, in addition, are expensive aircraft. Whatever the merits of Hart's proposal, he has not argued that the purpose of his plan is to save money: his concern is strategy, not budgets.

Incidentally, the use of the Harrier as a foil for the F-18 illustrates the unfairness of judging a weapons system by its initial shakedown problems. A few years ago the Harrier was where the F-18 is today, at the stage of moving from prototype to production aircraft. In the first years of its use by the U.S. Marines, a number of Harriers crashed. Defense critics pounced on the crashes as proof that once again the Pentagon had wasted billions on a piece of junk. However, the Harrier's early problems were rectified, and today it is a highly regarded aircraft.

Fourth, CBS did not mention that the Canadian armed forces and the Canadian government have compared the F-18 with the F-16 and several competing European jets. After a series of tests, the Canadians decided to buy the F-18 as their first-line fighter for the 1980's. The F-18 is also a serious candidate for purchase by the air forces of Australia and Spain.

Fifth, CBS implied that the F-18 proves that high technology in weapons is intrinsically a mistake. Threlkeld: "High technology is not much help when things start getting confused. . . . Combat is always confused." This was proved, said CBS, by Air Force exercises in which less sophisticated F-5 fighters fared well in dog-fights against Navy F-14's and Air Force F-15's. But CBS did not tell its viewers that the exercises were designed to train pilots, not to test aircraft. Consequently, one of the ground rules forbade engagement before eye contact was achieved. In actual combat one of the principal advantages of the F-14 and F-15 is their ability, lacking in the F-5, to shoot down enemy aircraft using long-range guided missiles before the enemy aircraft come into visual range.

CBS extrapolated from the F-18 to all other high-technology weaponry. Said Threlkeld: "It won't be the first of our weapons trapped by its own technology. There are lots of others." But of these "lots" CBS could name only two, and primarily the XM-1 tank. CBS criticized the XM-1 as "so heavy, so complex, it gets only three gallons to the mile." "It can't go nearly as far as our old tanks," the show asserted. Threlkeld used the XM-1 to justify his statement that "Every major American weapons system today is the product of the same thinking: build a few complex weapons, instead of a lot of simpler ones."

In the XM-1 tank, as in the F-18, CBS picked a system in its teething stage where a negative judgment could not be refuted conclusively. The only good thing that CBS could find to say about the XM-1 was that it is fast, an advantage supposedly outweighed by its fuel consumption, its cost, and its mechanical unreliability. CBS did not mention the tank's "special armor" which will defeat many current Russian anti-tank rockets, its astounding shock-absorber system that allows it to achieve unparalleled accuracy when firing on the move, or its elaborate features to protect the crew from blast and fire.

Even the CBS treatment of the XM-1's fuel consumption was biased. The XM-1 uses more fuel than existing American tanks because it has a new turbine engine. The Army chose the new turbine over the standard diesel, even though it uses more fuel, for several reasons. First, diesels are notoriously difficult to start in cold weather, whereas the turbine has no problems, an obvious advantage for a tank that is designed for use in a European winter. Second, existing tank diesels are extremely loud, and usually a tank is heard approaching long before it is sighted visually; the XM-1's turbine is so quiet that the tank's treads make more noise than the engine. Finally, where existing tanks can often be spotted as they move from a standstill because a diesel engine normally emits a telltale smoke plume, the XM-1's turbine does not put out a smoke plume when accelerating. Ignoring the advantages of the XM-1 engine, CBS simply dismissed it as a gas guzzler.

CBS suggested that Congress, as part of the Iron Triangle, is hopelessly devoted to high technology. Actually, Congress was nervous about the Army's decision to adopt a turbine engine for the XM-1. At the insistence of Congress, the Army developed

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an alternative diesel engine in case the turbine engine failed to live up to hopes. Although experiencing normal shakedown problems, the turbine has proved itself, and Congress has ended funding for the alternative diesel engine.

While CBS criticized extreme technological sophistication in U.S. weapons, it also played the other side of the fence. In its third segment, entitled *Call to Arms,* CBS touted American technological superiority in order to downplay the Russian threat. After noting the Russian numerical superiority over NATO in tanks (38,000 versus 17,000), in attack helicopters (two to one), in men under arms (400,000 more), and in combat aircraft (200 to 700 more), Ed Bradley minimized the significance of the figures by stating: "But before you put up a white flag, remember that wars aren't won by fire power alone, and you don't measure tank against tank, but tank against tank killer. Then there's technology. In most areas, we're supposed to have the edge." This statement was inconsistent with the CBS attack on high technology in its segment on weapons procurement. But the two themes were consistent with CBS's overall stress: the U.S. should not spend more money on defense.

A VIEWER who sat through all five evenings of *The Defense of the United States* would have learned that the United States is not threatened by any external enemy, but rather by the tragic propensity of the two superpowers each to see in the other a mirror reflection of its own fears and hostilities. Guided by these misplaced fears, by the insensibilities of the military mentality, and by the venalities of Congressmen and contractors, the United States is about to spend itself into bankruptcy on weapons which, had we to use them in a real war, would not work, except to kill Western European civilians. Worst of all, our Dr. Strangeloves are pursuing the self-fulfilling idea that nuclear war is indeed possible and are on the way to incinerating us all.

This caricature of U.S. defense policy is a familiar one. It had great currency a decade ago, before it was rejected by most Americans in favor of a more realistic view. Perhaps one reason for its rejection is that it does not stand up to scrutiny, as should be clear from the large number of factual errors, distortions, and misrepresentations to which CBS had to resort in order to bolster its case.

CBS is entitled to its opinions. *The Defense of the United States,* however, was not presented as an editorial but as a news documentary. As the largest information outlet in the Western world, CBS has a responsibility to impartiality and objectivity which it has seriously failed to meet. For the record (and for the Federal Communications Commission), the network will continue to say that its series presented all sides, but the people at CBS gave every indication that they knew otherwise. They felt that "the opposition wasn't doing its job," so they staged their own guerrilla attack against the emerging consensus in favor of rearming America.

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Philip Roth Then and Now

Ruth R. Wisse

PHILIP ROTH's was the first literary voice that seemed to speak for our bunch, our group, our set, the particular gang of adolescents with whom I shared a mutual affection and an idea of what we stood against. None of us, to my knowledge, had ever been to Newark, New Jersey, the birthplace of Roth and of his major heroes. Our own lower- and middle-class Jewish families were one generation closer to the immigrant source—they were immigrants themselves—and correspondingly farther from the landscaped suburbs and Ivy League colleges that formed the periphery of his world. But at the center of Philip Roth's stories and early novels was a sensibility so familiar that it seemed to have come from our own midst, and in a sparkle of language that was as attractive to us as, to the hero of *Goodbye, Columbus,* was the Jewish American "king's daughter" (his phrase back in 1959) climbing out of the country-club pool. Our affection for Philip Roth was part of the tenderness we felt for ourselves.

In the world of Philip Roth as we perceived it then, a nice young man struggled to emancipate himself from the oppression of bourgeois conformity. This was a thoroughly familiar literary subject, but its application by Roth to a Jewish milieu gave it fresh springiness. With a genius for mimicry, he reinvented the *bourgeois gentilhomme* as a team of Jewish parents with a supporting chorus of uncles and aunts, rabbis and teachers, all stumbling in a wonderfully comic way over their newly acquired language, possessions, and position. American Jewish society lacked the entrenched codes of morals and standing that formed the basis of the novel of manners, but it had just the right kind of nouveau-riche earnestness for anti-bourgeois satire, and a commitment to security that was the more concentrated because so recently attained. The perspective of the sensitive, educated hero, with whom we naturally identified, became the perfect vehicle for exploding the naive materialism and flawed morality of the parent generation.

Roth's American Jewish bourgeoisie had, to its credit, an elemental vitality, even if of a kind that made it more threatening. The anxiety of the fathers and the ferocity of the mothers nurturing and guiding their young bore the mark of hard-won experience. These people had known poverty when it meant hunger, disease, homelessness, fear. They knew anti-Semitism as a threat to existence, not just to social acceptance. Having worked their own way to safety, they pressed its bounty on their children, along with instructions for its perpetuation. But so successfully had the parents secured their children that this protected world was now received by them as a condition of being, a natural birthright rather than a value or ideal. To children who had never wanted for food, crammed refrigerators appeared not a bulwark against hunger but an unconsummated orgy. The concern for practical advancement in the form of good jobs and—why not?—good marriages seemed a vulgar affront to the spirit that ought not to be housebound, but free to soar to distant heights. Admittedly there was something tempting in the parental scheme, a reassuring prospect of safety—all the more reason to admire those of Roth's protagonists who could resist the lure of this bourgeois materialism, *Jewish* materialism, and strike out independently toward the higher goal.

From the outset, Roth's fictional interpretation of American Jews as a regnant bourgeoisie disturbed as much as it amused. Jews of the parent generation, reacting with understandable pique to this parody of their aspirations and achievements, granted Roth what no American contemporary, not even Norman Mailer, had been able to provoke, and what no American author since Henry Miller has more enjoyed—a public antagonism, proof in the form of outrage that his work had hit a nerve. In protesting that he had not portrayed them fairly, these Jews offered the most tangible demonstration of his success. For the critic of bourgeois complacency, what sweeter response than his constituency's cry of "foul," exposing that very obsession with propriety that he has been ridiculing? It was not for Philip Roth to worry, as many other serious American authors have had to do, about artistic irrelevance: he has always had the fuel of audience reaction pumping.

The Jewish component of the work obviously raised the thorniest issue. Because the enemies of the Jews have so rarely distinguished among their

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many diverse qualities, or indeed, bothered to understand them at all, many Jews are discomfited by any slighting references to them as a group, and see such criticism as provocative of anti-Semitism. Roth's identification of the Jews with the new middle class was perceived as just such a danger. He could argue, and did, that his mockery was only proof of their normalization, and that by doing what writers habitually do, singling out their own group for attention, he was showing confidence in their American security and strength. The older generation remained skeptical of this explanation, and continued to resist his negative assessment of their worth.

But for the younger generation of readers, perhaps especially for the Jews among them, Roth's early fiction was actually therapeutic, rescuing us from a cultural insecurity of which we were only beginning to be aware. If ever a generation lived in the shadow of its predecessor, it was ours: after the war, after the heroic period of Zionism, after the failed messianism of world revolution, after the battles for ontological supremacy between the Marxists and the Freudians, after it all. Sitting in college libraries reading about the great ideals or even about the greater horrors of the recent past; feeling in our parents the accumulated power of apprehended experience while we, approaching twenty, still worried about first-class grades—how could we take ourselves seriously? Even the sting of self-deprecation was blunted. It had been recorded by Kafka.

As for the American Jewish subject, it was in the process of being patented. Writers about a decade older than Roth were laying the groundwork for a "breakthrough" with the authority of true pioneers. Daniel Fuchs, Saul Bellow, Isaac Rosenfeld, Bernard Malamud, knew refrigeration when it still required a block of sawdust-covered ice to keep the fruit from spoiling. In them the tension between action and thought, politics and art, Europe and America, Yiddish and English, particular and universal, throbbed like the artery under a pressing thumb. There seemed to be nothing left—in literature as in life—for a self-consciously literate wave of latecomers: no originality, no independent voice. Yet this was the very type that Philip Roth saw fit to introduce as his protagonist, someone whose handicap was part of his charm.

Here, for example, at the critical point of Roth's first novella, is the hero, making his move to wean his girl away from her family by introducing her to the pleasure principle. For their mutual and separate good he invites her to get herself a diaphragm, and after three pages of text, the dialogue is still running:

"Of course it's conscious. That's exactly it. Don't you see? It would change us."

"It would change me."

"Us. Together."

"Neil, how do you think I'd feel lying to some doctor."

"You can go to Margaret Sanger, in New York. They don't ask any questions."

"You've done this before?"

"No," I said. "I just know. I read Mary McCarthy."

So the knowledge that the drama of human discovery had already been exhausted, and what is more, *recorded* in print, before his character's coming of age did not prevent Philip Roth from launching a lively new theater of players. Unlike the young men in the works of his immediate predecessors, Roth's college boys have survived no burning Brooklyn tenements, no eagle hunts, no martyrdoms or climactic Oedipal disclosures. Yet they are engaging enough to claim the imagination and to project a contemporary style. What is more, they explore the one area of innovation that did seem to us then to remain uncharted. In the twilight of the 50's when the taboo against extramarital sex was still strong, censorship rigid, and even devices for birth control a brave new venture, sex was the area not only of self-definition but even of social reform. I do not think it an exaggeration to say that Roth heralded for us the sexual revolution, and brought it to its cathartic pitch. As late as 1967 I recall an evening when a number of us—many then expatriates in New York City—got together for an informal reunion, and our keenest avant-gardist insisted on reading aloud an item he had just found in the *New American Review*. By the time he was two pages into "The Jewish Blues," later to be incorporated as a chapter of *Portnoy's Complaint*, we were aching with laughter, recognizing in that sustained literary *shpritz* the inflated, improbable edge of our own struggles with civilization.

Roth's Jewish bourgeois comedy provided us, during our prolonged adolescence, with models of the lovable hero, whose fumbling attempts at direct self-gratification foiled the inhibited digestive tracts and spirits of his elders, and whose "honest" search for a better life exposed the hypocrisy of those with foreordained religious and ethnic guidelines. This was no small thing to owe a writer.

It is tempting to speak of Philip Roth as if he were the author of but a single creation, the chucked-beneath-the chin Jewish college boy who first appeared in *Goodbye, Columbus* and *Letting Go*, resurfaced in *Portnoy's Complaint*, and made his way through difficult marriages and into the difficulties of a literary career in *My Life as a Man* and *The Professor of Desire*. In truth, of course, Philip Roth's highly disciplined professional career included a good deal more. *When She Was Good*, a passable if not memorable novel, about the ruin brought upon a small-town family by a young woman bent on vir-

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tuous propriety, moves some of the author's ongoing preoccupations into a Christian, Midwestern setting. *Our Gang*, written a decade ago, is a furious political satire of the Nixon administration, invoking the spirit if not finally the talent of Jonathan Swift and George Orwell. In *The Breast*, Roth broke briefly with the bounds of realistic fiction, and pitched his imagination farther than usual into the grotesque. In interviews, he has spoken of unfinished plays.

But though his work has ranged in setting and form, no one could have been surprised, or unhappy, to see the author returning as he has recently done to the fictional adventures of the lad from Newark. In Roth's two most recent novels, *The Ghost Writer** and *Zuckerman Unbound*,† this young man has become a writer, in the first novel a fledgling writer visiting a Master, and in the second an all-too-renowned novelist trying to cope with his new fame. In the supposed interval between these two books, the hero, Nathan Zuckerman, is "known" to have published a raunchy novel about the sexual and cultural rebellion of a Newark boy against his middle-class Jewish family. The resemblance between this book, *Carnovsky*, and Philip Roth's own *Portnoy's Complaint* is so integral to this work of fiction that *Carnovsky* does not have to be fully described to the reader: the many allusions to its eroticism, to its exposure of Jewish family life, and to the quality of its fame assume a familiarity with Roth's bestseller of the 1960's.

Zuckerman Unbound marks a new stage in the development of Roth's favorite hero. For the first time he is not an apprentice, not the enmeshed and guilty son or husband or house guest, but a realized success, living in his own apartment and buying his own—in the plural—suits. Zuckerman's promotion to independent manhood is suggested in a number of ways.

He is first accosted and then persistently shadowed by a failed version of himself, a certain Alvin Pepler, who had attained celebrity status in the 50's as a contestant on a TV quiz show only to be cheated of his glory when the producers rigged him out of the game. In Pepler, who contributes the liveliest moments to this book, Jewish paranoia and resilient determination are so craftily combined that Zuckerman doesn't know whether to enjoy or protect himself. Pepler's poaching on Zuckerman, his adoration and curiosity, mixed with something more sinister, seem a comic, almost vaudevillian, rendition of Zuckerman's own pursuit of the famous author, E. I. Lonoff, in the previous work, *The Ghost Writer*. This time it is our hero who is the Master.

In the realm of sex and marriage that has caused this hero so much anguish in earlier novels, Zuckerman now also appears to have reached a safe plateau. He is fortunately disengaged from a do-gooder named Laura (a spiritual sister of the heroine of *When She Was Good*) and if he loses out to Fidel Castro in his affections for a gorgeous actress, he can take comfort in the company he keeps: "Kennedy couldn't stop him. Johnson couldn't stop him. Nixon won't stop him. So how can I?. . ." Fame has taken some of the sting out of sex as a test of prowess.

BY FAR the most profound indication of Zuckerman's new status is the loss of his father, whose death throes and funeral form the concluding section of the book. As he flies home from Miami following the long hospital vigil, the death, and the burial, Zuckerman is surprised by his own feeling of exhilaration. "He had become himself again—though with something unknowable added: he was no longer any man's son. Forget father, he told himself. Plural."

As an extension of his mourning he takes one last tour of the landscape of his youth, a physical neighborhood which retains not a trace of its former character. Not just his father has died. The whole thing is irretrievably lost. The synagogue where young Nathan had taken Hebrew lessons is now an African Methodist Episcopal church. Half-echoing King Lear on the heath, with the kind of literary self-parody that Philip Roth increasingly employs, the hero concludes that it is all over. "All his lyrical feeling for the neighborhood had gone into *Carnovsky*. It had to—there was no other place for it. 'Over. Over. Over. Over. Over. I've served my time.' "

When the blind Lear accepts the responsibility for the death of his favorite and the destruction of his kingdom he pays for his moral vision in kind. Zuckerman's reckoning is of a different weight and order. He is candidly relieved at the sight of this world that is no more because it confirms the rightness of his own decision, taken long before, to move beyond it. What is more, as an artist he had given lyrical expression to what now lies dead; and if his feeling went merely into literature, well, "It had to. There was no other place for it." The loss, saddening, is also liberating. As he sits watching his blasted heath through a limousine window, he is granted by the author the same charmed approval that he has received from the outset.

In fact, the larger literary analogue of this novel is not Lear at all, but Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*, from which, with due ironic modesty, it derives its name. The greatest of Romantic heroes, in a poem which is itself a reinterpretation of the ancient myth as told by Aeschylus, Prometheus steals fire from a tyrannical God to facilitate the lives of human beings on earth, and for this act of defiance risks eternal agony. What fun it is to see a nervous, haunted Nathan Zuckerman as the Jewish parody of Shelley's suffering Titan! Zuckerman's unrelenting fame—the Precipice to which

* See the review by Pearl K. Bell, COMMENTARY, December, 1979.

† Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 225 pp., $10.95.

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Prometheus is bound; the horde of Zuckerman's fans, some spiteful, others admiring, who pursue him day and night, in elevators, on buses, by mail and phone—the spirits and furies taunting Prometheus with the anguish he has wreaked on himself and the world. Like the drama of Prometheus, Zuckerman's novel is also set in the aftermath of his "betrayal" of his father, and is spent rehearsing the meaning and the ambiguous consequences of that act. Even Shelley's magnificent concluding paean to Love, that folds its healing wings over the world, is imitated and transposed when Zuckerman tries to comfort his father with a grand vision of the universal design, borrowed from Velikovsky.

Fun is not this parody's only aim. It is true that no modern artist could say, with the ringing conviction of the Romantic:

> I would fain
> Be what it is my destiny to be,
> The savior and the strength of suffering
> man. . . .

But at least in the manner of contemporary small-scale heroes, Zuckerman is presented as a dedicated literary man who worries about his craft, quoting Proust and Flaubert. He does bear all the stigmata of the artist, including an essential estrangement from loved ones, occupational loneliness, hypersensitivity, and that new form of artistic agony, the dangerous public exposure of today's superstar. At the heart of *Zuckerman Unbound* is a faith in the inviolate value of art. The artist's private failings are redeemed by his creation. In defying tyranny, whether Jove's or the Jewish parent's, the writer renders the ultimate service, though his reward be "pain, pain ever, for ever!"

By his own suggestive references to his earlier work and to the cultural milieu from which it emerged, Philip Roth makes it possible to look back now on the development of the character who has become Nathan Zuckerman: indeed, he seems to invite such a consideration. Where the early heroes demonstrated their opposition to embourgeoisement by searching for sexual pleasure, their late counterparts pursue a more substantial form of self-realization through artistic creation. The initial resistance of the protagonist to the Jewish middle-class agenda has gradually expressed and justified itself in a successful writing career. Keeping pace with this thematic progression is the author's own technical development: far more than his previous works, *The Ghost Writer* and *Zuckerman Unbound* are models of compression and formal elegance.

But as prominent as the sense of development is the depressing sameness of focus. In fact, one aspect of the mock-Promethean parallel is that it permits Philip Roth to cast even a successful Zuckerman in the familiar boyish role. Despite the young man's apparent triumph as an artist, and despite his transcendence of his father's judgment, he remains in precisely the same relation to the adult world as he was in all his former transmigrations. In place of the mother or aunt who used to browbeat her child with manifestations of her love, we now have the ambivalent affection of fans and agents, weighing down the object of their enthusiasm with the same mixture of promise and threat. In place of the fathers—as Zuckerman says, "plural"—we have the hero's brother, who appears in the final moments of the book as the recycled voice of the Jewish bourgeoisie. At the very point when the author and his character might have moved on to other concerns, or, better yet, to a profounder interpretation of their ongoing concerns, we have instead the tired, predictable image of the nice young man resisting middle-class oppression.

It is worth looking at this in a little detail to see just how far and how little the author has actually traveled. The climax of this novel comes when Zuckerman struggles for the last time with his father's judgment. Did his father die with a curse on his lips, or is the son imagining a punishment to atone for an inevitable bout of guilt? For several pages, Zuckerman, wondrously inventive, wrestles with his difficult legacy, but he is rescued from himself by a *diabolus ex machina*, the familiar Jewish *gentilhomme*, here in the guise of his brother Henry. Speaking as their father's surrogate, Henry whips Zuckerman with the routine complaints about his indecency, impropriety, and lack of restraint:

> What does loyalty mean to you? What does responsibility mean to you? What does self-denial mean, *restraint*—anything at all? To you everything is disposable! Everything is *ex*posable! Jewish morality, Jewish endurance, Jewish wisdom, Jewish families—everything is grist for your fun-machine. . . . You killed him, Nathan. With that book. . . . He'd seen it! He'd seen what you had done to him and Mother in that book!

Way back in *Portnoy's Complaint*, the son had had to cope with the hypothetical possibility that his father would die while he was off screwing *shiksas*—plural—in some foreign land. Now the ante has been raised to patricide, Jewish-style, which means no actual murder, of course, but a chosen path that blatantly rejects, here in full public view, the parental way of life. How many times, in one or another form, has this litany of recrimination been hurled against a Roth hero in successive "Jewish" outbursts?

Were brother Henry a reliable character, the reader might be expected to weigh his judgment against evidence provided elsewhere in the book. But before Philip Roth lets Henry speak he first takes pains to discredit him thoroughly. For one college term, we are told, Henry flirted with the idea of a career in the theater, but then he "met sweet and studious Carol Goff, a scholarship girl, and gave her his ZBT pin," thereby ending the

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argument he had been having with his father and himself. With the deftness—and depth—of a stand-up comic, Roth summarizes Henry's career as a proper bourgeois husband and father who carries on torrid affairs on the side, slinks meekly home when his wife reminds him how gentle, kind, devoted, and self-sacrificing he really is, and admits to having entered this unwanted marriage in the first place because it was the only way he could honorably retrieve his copy of Stanislavsky's *An Actor Prepares*.

Henry's life, in a word, is murder, and the person being murdered is himself. And just as the adult Jews in Roth's previous fiction took out their own frustration and their repressed libido in attacks on the "liberated" hero, so too this second-generation member of Roth's Jewish middle class vents his misery in envious anger against the one who broke free, who shirks his responsibilities, and all the rest.

Coming as they do from a compromised character, a dentist (to be a dentist, a failed doctor, in this kind of Jewish humor is already the beginning of a joke) these accusations, far from sullying Zuckerman, confirm him.

IN SHORT, having failed to supply Zuckerman with any intrinsic depth, the author resorts to his own cliché. He invites the reader to share his mockery of Henry's morality of discontent, and his implicit approval of Zuckerman who is its victim. Roth stacks the deck against Henry with the same kind and quality of accusations and unproved allegations that Henry uses against Nathan Zuckerman. Rather than organizing a new set of insights and attitudes, Roth reaches for tricks of the trade.

When he explained himself to his early public critics, Philip Roth rightly protested that he could not be indicted for his failure as a Jew because he was not making any claim for himself as a Jew. He was a writer, to be appreciated by the standards of literature alone. But as it now appears, these two categories have in his case become closely linked. The image of the bourgeois Jew, which originally served Roth as such a stimulating goad, has long since atrophied into a stereotype and become an artistic liability. Useful as it may have been to the adolescent in helping him concentrate his energy of opposition, it stifles the mature artist by offering an automatic and easy target, too easily substituted for invention. If Roth has buried Zuckerman's father only to reconstruct him several pages later as his brother Henry, where is the progress, and what has there been to mourn? (Indeed, if Roth were really still as sharp on the Jewish middle class as he once was, he would know that "Henry" is no longer a dentist but by now almost certainly a professor of literature, or better yet, a writer.)

Reading Philip Roth remains pleasurable, but the pleasure has in it the element of predictability. Those who want literature to reassure them by fufilling the expectations they bring to it will find in Philip Roth their comfortable assumptions of twenty odd years ago. In order to go beyond this, Roth would have to part with the formula that brought him undeniable success, but at the cost of that greater success his latest heroes espouse: the success of the artist unbound.

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The Quintessential Liberal

Robert Nisbet

More than anyone else I can think of, including the late Hubert Humphrey, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., George McGovern, and James McGregor Burns, among others, John Kenneth Galbraith is the nearly perfect exemplar of American liberalism as we have come to know it since World War II. No one else comes close to Galbraith in the exquisite fit of his mind and its limitations to the essential theme and the varied idols of the liberal cause in our times. He is the very model for those now in school or college who want to do good things on the grand scale, and also to do well in life.

Galbraith is not and never will be noted as an economist, save among non-economists of liberal persuasion—journalists, television producers, social workers, book reviewers, and sundry others. This fact seems not to bother him at all —on the contrary, it provides further evidence of his superiority over the Mises, the Hayeks, the Friedmans, Haberlers, and Fellners of this world, whom he characterizes as archaists, worshippers of dead bones, and obfuscators all. For Galbraith the whole truth about economics lies at midpoint in a triangle formed by the names of Marx, Veblen, and Keynes. Although there is little evidence of Marxist writ in his recently published autobiography*—apart from dedicated opposition to the system of free private enterprise and a certain fondness for genteel socialism —nevertheless individual Marxists, from his graduate-school days onward, seem to have excited Galbraith's most devoted encomiums.

Many, including Galbraith himself, have commented extravagantly upon the grace of his style. Yet it cannot escape the attentive reader of Galbraith's prose that the patterning of words means more to him than the fusion of words to thoughts, experiences, and emotions, which is the true test of style. This can make for the kind of writing we associate with *Weltschmerz*, with *fin de siècle*, but not with enduring, memorable, or evocative literature.

His book takes us many places, starting with his birthplace in rural Ontario, to Berkeley as a graduate student, to Washington (over and over and over), Harvard, London, New Delhi, the Soviet Union, and a score of other locales. In most of them he was either one of the movers and shakers or else was closely positioned to them. There are many portraits in the book. That of Henry Luce is quite good; so is that of Adlai Stevenson who, we find, was anything but the high-toned ditherer of popular impression; the chapters on both JFK and LBJ are disappointing, more nearly stages on which Galbraith may posture than serious inquiries or reflections. The best single portrait in the entire book, notwithstanding the fact that the author intended it so, is of Galbraith himself. This, for any who wish to go and do likewise, makes *A Life in Our Times* valuable reading.

He has been many things: farmer (detesting every moment of it), student, professor, bureaucrat, ambassador, adviser and speech writer to Presidents, editor (at *Fortune*), author, lecturer, and economist. But what he has been longest and most tenaciously is a practicing liberal, committed from earliest years to the eradication of as much of the free private enterprise system as possible, and to the kinds of concentration of political power necessary to achieve that end. For only through such power can the limitless complexities of human society be given some degree of rationalization and centralized planning. The third chapter of the book is titled "First Glimpse of Grandeur." It is not about Athens or Rome but, believe it or not, the Department of Agriculture when the young Galbraith visited it for the first time in the 1930's, in the early days of the New Deal.

No wonder, then, that Galbraith found Harvard insufferably dull and drear when he reported, after a summer of all this grandeur, to his first teaching job. There was nothing that Harvard could do to or for Galbraith beyond boring him —or at least causing him to retreat from its society. Graduate work at Berkeley and a summer in Washington had brought his passion for political power and for centralized, welfare government to a temper that would be proof against all subsequent experience. If he learned little thereafter, he forgot nothing.

By Galbraith's reckoning, there is precious little that would not be improved by its nationalization, or at least by its subjection to centralized planning from Washington. Thus, no Catholic theologian called to the Sacred College ever had a more ecstatic reaction than did Galbraith when he was called

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* *A Life in Our Times*, Houghton Mifflin, 563 pp., $16.95.

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to work under that master economic czar, Leon Henderson, who headed the Office of Price Administration (OPA) in World War II. For Galbraith, as he freely admits, the real war was not the one fought with heavy casualties in the Gilberts, Marianas, and at the Normandy landing. It was, rather, the war between the evangels of light from the New Deal and the minions of Lucifer from the dark world of free private enterprise.

Reading Galbraith's fervent passages on the great deeds he and others of the briefcase brigade accomplished in the war years, I find myself thinking of a new version of von Clausewitz's celebrated apothegm on war. Mine reads: war is the continuation of *social* policy by other means. In truth, an occasional war has a tonic effect upon bureaucracy, and Congress—at least in the past—has never been so indulgent about the social budget as when there has been an increasing military budget. At one point Galbraith laments the ease with which liberals and the military became congenial during the war, but he has little trouble mastering his grief. The potential booty was just too tempting.

No amount of negative evidence disturbs Galbraith's belief in the joys of bureaucracy, or faith in such a monstrosity as OPA, with tens of thousands of sham giants and real pygmies putting prices on everything from hemorrhoid-soothers to tractors for the farms, or his delight in the thought of millions of inverted Micawbers (Chesterton's phrase, I believe) waiting tirelessly for something to turn down. True, Galbraith waxes wroth at the wartime memory of gamy businessmen and venal politicians who swarmed in like locusts, but he is serenely oblivious to the very real prospect that political planning and management of the economy are precisely calculated to exercise an irresistibly magnetic attraction upon these many and noisome pests.

THE fact is that Galbraith's mind seems ruled by what the late psychologist, Leon Festinger, called the principle of cognitive dissonance. Festinger had been attracted by such religious groups as the Millerites in mid-19th-century America. On the one hand, they believed devoutly in the imminent ending of the world and actually gave precise dates. On the other hand, as we know, the world did not end. Result: all the greater tenacity, even passion, of belief by the Millerites. There can be, in sum, an iron inverse relation between doggedness of faith and what evidence reveals.

So with Galbraith. The greater the record of failure, disorganization, erosion, and collapse, the stronger the faith in the measures which brought on disaster. No one, I assume, but Galbraithians needs to be told that the inflation now raging and tearing into our social fabric is in substantial measure the direct product of the wildly reckless piling of huge social deficits, in the interest of what was called "compassion," upon the equally huge deficits caused by our ill-conceived, ill-fated entry into Vietnam. And no one but a Galbraithian needs to be told that a chief reason for the calamitous breakdown of our normal social and psychological controls—those intrinsic to family, school, neighborhood, community, and voluntary association—during the last few years is the prior invasion of these social structures by the "federal bulldozer."

Democracy succeeds only through what may be called predemocratic strata of association, and when a misguided democracy, or rather its misguided government, ravages these "inns and resting places of the human spirit," as Edmund Burke called them, their natural restraints over human beings, and especially the young, will not last long. How can they? In many ways the *moral* inflation caused by the ideas and policies so doggedly advanced by people like Galbraith through the last several decades is worse than the financial. Through tracts like Galbraith's *The Affluent Society*, expectations multiplied and grew grander, ever harder to gratify. Restraints crumbled. The result was a social and moral chaos, reflected in the exponentially rising number of security guards, security dogs, alarm systems, and, of course, handguns. As the Galbraithian state waxes, the moral order wanes.

GALBRAITH is plainly peevish at the amount of success which the doctrines of free-sector economists have recently enjoyed. He regards such doctrines as the "conventional wisdom," oblivious to the fact that the *real* "conventional wisdom" of the past half-century, beginning with the New Deal, to be found in most of the schools and colleges and editorial offices in the nation, is, in a word, Galbraithism. To be a Friedmanite in the period 1950-70 on any college campus took raw courage.

Galbraith's attack on such as Hayek, Friedman, and Haberler concentrates in part on the proposition that the free competition they celebrate and defend is anyway a sham. He proved, did he not, in his *New Industrial State* that such competition as there is in America is more or less mom-and-pop in significance, and without visible effect upon the corporate giants? Besides, look what horrors are perpetrated by the *myth* of free enterprise. From *The Affluent Society*, he cites again a passage by which he is still charmed:

> The family which takes its mauve and cerise, air-conditioned, power-steered and power-braked car out for a tour, passes through cities that are badly paved, made hideous by blighted buildings, billboards, and posts for wires that should long since have been put underground. They pass on into a countryside that has been rendered largely invisible by commercial art. . . . They picnic on exquisitely packaged food from a portable icebox by a polluted stream and go on to spend the night at a park which is a menace to public health and morals. Just before dozing off on an air-mattress, beneath a nylon tent, amid the stench of decaying refuse, they reflect vaguely on the curious unevenness of their blessings. Is this, indeed, the American genius?

No, would say the vast majority

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of American people, millions of whom have actually had the experience of taking such a tour, again and again. My guess is that the only "unevenness" Galbraith's tour group in Never-Land might experience as they explore the Adirondacks, Appalachians, Rockies, and the Sierra, as they boat and fish in literally thousands of lakes, streams, rivers, and coastal areas, as they camp in the tens of millions of acres of forested land into which even the cleanest of fuel and mineral explorers may not venture, is the discrepancy between what they want and like as against the Galbraithian conviction of what they *should* want and like.

INDEED, the main target of Galbraith's famous wit is the bumpkins, yokels, and knaves who together give America its GNP. The other main targets are rival economists who are so unsophisticated as to see merit in a private sector, and all the other reactionaries he encountered in his years as a professor and who even, we are here told, worked against his rise to professorship at Harvard and his nomination for president of the American Economic Association. He is not, I regret to say, as good on the academic as the political-bureaucratic world. The reason is that although you can occasionally take Galbraith out of the government, you can't take government out of Galbraith. Thus, whether it is Berkeley or Harvard or Princeton, we receive nothing much more than *politics*, that is, national and international politics. The interesting and good people are either Marxists or Keynesians; other faculty range from the ignorant to the fatuous with only the occasional exception, such as Joseph Schumpeter, a leading light when Galbraith went to Harvard.

Galbraith liked Berkeley, where he spent the early 1930's as a graduate student, but it must have been simply as a lovely campus setting, for most of his chapter on that experience is given to putting reactionaries in proper pillory and stock. One would never guess that in this decade Berkeley finally reached the top among universities in the world; it was a decade in which such presences as Lawrence and Oppenheimer were well along in their revolutionary scientific work, and known for that to all on the campus (or almost all, thinking of Galbraith); in which the likes of Kroeber, Lowie, Tolman, Teggart, and Bolton were doing their most exciting work and offering renowned classes and seminars. The best Galbraith can recall from his few years at Berkeley is one Robert Merriman, a teaching assistant who was later to join the Spanish Civil War and become the prototype of Hemingway's hero, Robert Jordan, in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. By the time he had left Berkeley and taken up his first post in Washington, at the Agriculture Department, "the most prestigious of my California contemporaries were Communists." So much for Berkeley.

ON Harvard he is even worse. He titles his early chapter "Harvard Before Democracy." Let the Kittredges, Bridgmans, Schumpeters, McIlwains, Hendersons, and Whiteheads take that! Of the famed Henderson and Whitehead colloquies and seminars, which affected the most diverse of faculty and students, we learn nothing from Galbraith, quite content with his reactionaries and retarded minds in the economics department. In melancholy accents he tells of how Theodore H. White, an undergraduate at the time, was crippled by lack of democracy. This is not the impression conveyed by White's own long chapter on his Harvard days in his book, *In Search of History*, which teems with joys and discoveries and earned rewards.

In one place, though, Galbraith is unintendedly hilarious. We learn that just prior to the student uprisings at Harvard in the middle and late 60's, Galbraith, by now back from several more years in government service, tried vainly to apprise the university of just what was wrong with it so far as the lives of students were concerned. To no avail; no one would listen. The result, Galbraith tells us righteously, was the perdition the university deserved. We are not, however, made privy to the advice that Galbraith sought to offer. *What* did he know, and *when* did he know it? That is the question that would haunt anyone involved from 1963 on in the Student Wars. And even if Harvard chose invincible ignorance, could not Galbraith have yielded up his secrets to his friend and fellow economist Clark Kerr, so sorely beset out at Berkeley?

THE humor becomes delicious when it is remembered that what the student Left was turning its guns on was, in a word, Galbraithism! Unlike their less sophisticated predecessors in the history of student radicalism, they were not after the archaic capitalism of McKinley or Coolidge vintage. They were after liberalism (how the New Left hated liberals), old socialism, the regulated, bureaucratic, corporate variant of the welfare state, replete with big (and hated) unions, the kind of liberalism that the New Deal had inaugurated and that the New Frontier and Great Society brought to maturity. *This* was the real enemy of the student Left, which anathematized Washington bureaucracy, fair or foul, in exactly the same way it did corporate board rooms.

Galbraith seems to be under the impression that the so-called student revolutions in the 1960's were primarily responses to *academic* conditions; he could not be more wrong. For the New Left the campus was useful solely as a launching-pad for revolution; the issue of college life was just so much easy camouflage.

But Galbraith's insights are often befuddled or else muddied by liberal dogma. In 1948, I have learned from a distinguished economist, Galbraith, reacting to the bold and brilliant relaxation of controls by German economics minister Ludwig Erhard, the prelude to West Germany's extraordinary economic recovery, wrote: "There never has been the slightest possibility of getting German recovery by this wholesale repeal of controls and regulations." Keynes was great enough to admit that rarely has

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"modernist stuff gone wrong and turned sour and silly" so quickly. Not Galbraith. In this book, Erhard's feat is made one-half accident and one-half yield of prior intercessions in the economy by a pair of American (and no doubt Keynesian) bureaucrat-economists. Once again, Galbraithian cognitive dissonance, and also churlishness.

GALBRAITH tells us that he is hanging up his spikes, to sit from now on in the grandstand. So be it. There will be less joy in Mudville. But I think I do see another memoir issuing from this one, and I may have a title for it. Many years ago a Harvard English scholar, Bliss Perry, wrote a perfectly delightful book titled *And Gladly Teach*. That would not be right for Galbraith, but how about *And Gladly Plan*?

From the Memoirs of an Administrator—A Fable

John Hollander

YOU see, it was because one's rights in property were more assiduously protected, under the Former System, than one's rights to and in one's person, that we had to change everything. We took the property away and tried to share the Things as well as we could. And to protect our New Way of doing all that, we had to get everyone to abandon one's last residue of property, his or her person. For it was the person to which that anarchic pronoun "my" continued to be affixed (with all of the arrogance of a robber baron, waving his arm in a gesture which people like ourselves could only employ dismissively, but which he must needs use to designate the extent of his holdings). So that to prevent property from creeping back, like poor second-growth vegetation, into the centers of our lives, we had to do something about the Self.

This was simple enough to manage, but perhaps it has gone on working for so long because of one bold stroke, executed at the outset. After much speculation, planning, and experiment, we instituted the practice of allowing that there was, indeed, one human—but non-proprietary—right, that of suicide. Its exercise was permitted, in an act of official recognition accompanied by three days of ceremony, instruction, and national festivity. But the licensing never seemed to have affected the actual suicide rate one way or another. We knew that this would be the case. The exercise of freedom was too dearly bought, it seems, for there to be much of a demand for it. Who can tell us that this was unfair? Unjust?

2.

AT BOTTOM, the problem has been one of the inequities of luck; the very random pattern of its distribution makes that uneven distribution more of a conferring of privilege, not less of one. Infested with Temples of Fortune, even the Just City would develop its priests and its powers. In order to prevent this, we shall have to institute the final state of fairness: all lives will be prolonged, by whatever heroic medical approaches are necessary, until three score and ten; all will thereupon be terminated, whether the citizen in question has been dependent upon these means, or hale and hearty without them. This will considerably reduce the seedground of future injustice. Life will be allotted fairly to everyone; the "freedom" to live past a certain age will soon become as dubious a notion as what—even in our time—only a fool could call the "liberty" of dying young. Moreover, such a plan would do away, once and for all, with that plaguey and inconvenient fiction called Fortune, a force that our theories of justice have demystified and sought to extinguish.

3.

THE fair, equitable distribution of pain—that was another matter entirely. Our earliest planners had realized that pleasure would surely take care of itself: even back in the former days of privacy and unequal possession, pleasure redistributed itself more efficiently than wealth. Even—indeed, particularly—with no desire to share it, the suffusing joy experienced by one person would lead inevitably to someone else's delight, and so on. (Although the mathematical description of the

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stochastic processes involved in the distributions made writing equations for them almost impossible.) Pleasure could, under any social circumstances, make its way through the world. But the manner in which we had always hoarded up our own pain seemed a horrible reciprocal of this. For the greater the desire there was, under the old system, to unburden oneself of the private possession of pain—the more strident and desperate the means people adopted to share pain by calling attention to their own, by demanding that it be pieced out—the less anyone else would and could have access to it. The political economy of pain remained a troublesome riddle.

For the only solution we could devise dissolved not only the problem but what was to be shared as well. By implanting transmitter-receptors in all infants at birth, every impulse passing through anyone's pain centers would be instantaneously broadcast, as by the winnowing wind, at a frequency to which everyone would be tuned. Willy-nilly, one's pain would be universally shared. But because of inevitable engineering problems—the painful impulses themselves being employed for power-supply, and thereby being diffused along with the message of hurt they carried—the pain could never, after all, be fairly distributed. For when parceled out, each receptor's quantum of feeling would fall far below any perceptible threshold. (Such a portion of suffering would have no more presence, practically speaking, than, say, the finite but meaninglessly small gravitational force of the red star Antares upon our bodies from its mindlessly large distance.) There are about 150 million of us under the present administration; and yet there is no bearable human pain—none known that would not extinguish itself by causing immediate traumatic death—that augments the lowest perceptible level by more than a factor of a mere thousand. 1.5×10^{-9} of even the worst toothache could not be shared, nor could the exhaustion of loss: they would simply vanish into the world.

So THAT the whole project had to be abandoned. There was no way of parceling out physical or moral suffering without thereby immediately destroying its effects (and what, after all, is pain but our feeling of it?). It seemed somehow obscene to put into effect a plan that would be truly guilty of the otherwise false and groundless charges usually and shrilly leveled against our collectivizations of property and opportunity—that they vanished when broadly distributed. What could we do? This was surely one of our greatest failures.

John Hinckley—A Face in the Crowd

Peter Shaw

PERHAPS the most distressing aspect of the attempt on the life of President Reagan last March was the failure of anyone, in the days and minutes before it took place, to restrain his attacker. The security procedures for the President's exit from the Hilton Hotel have naturally come under investigation. Yet security was not really the issue. For one thing, as it has been widely observed in the aftermath, no public figure's safety can be infallibly insured in an open society. But more importantly, the truth is that in this case John Hinckley did not elude security so much as he successfully defied it.

In the weeks before he made his attempt, Hinckley repeatedly evidenced disturbed or suspicious behavior in public. In Lakewood, Colorado, some time after he had purchased his guns, a policeman noticed that he "kept staring at the police car and then looking away." Hinckley was questioned but not searched by the policeman, who later said:

> I never contacted a person so nervous who didn't have something dirty [i.e., illegal drugs, a gun, or stolen property] on him. He stands out as the most nervous person I've ever contacted.

At the Nashville airport, Hinckley was arrested for attempting to carry his three guns and fifty bullets onto an airplane. In getting caught, it should be noted, he was displaying either a wish to be punished or a lack of contact with reality. For firearms can be detected in an airport only when they are in the carry-on luggage that is routinely checked by X-ray. Anyone se-

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riously bent on transporting guns by plane has only to place them in the luggage that is checked and loaded separately—without being X-rayed. In addition to contriving to be caught, Hinckley behaved in such a way as to lead an airport security officer to conclude that "mentally he did not seem stable."

Finally, outside the Hilton Hotel before Hinckley shot the President, someone in the crowd observed that "he looked fidgety—agitated—a little strange, and I said to myself 'What if he takes a shot at the President?'" Someone else in the crowd recalled: "There was this police lieutenant who kept looking over my shoulder toward the guy." As Hinckley waited for the President to emerge, he muttered aloud to himself and made a sneering comment about the press. (The reporter who overheard his remark must have realized that it indicated Hinckley did not belong in the press section where he was standing.)

In the final analysis, Hinckley's impunity in all these instances was the product of a widespread change in how society views social deviance. The pendulum has swung so far from a rigid conception of propriety in public that for the crowd gathered outside the Hilton, bad manners would have consisted in *objecting* to behavior like Hinckley's. The very terms of the past—"social nuisance," "undesirable," "antisocial"—have come to sound quaint. When, in the aftermath of the attempt, former President Gerald Ford referred to "loners, kooks, screwballs" in connection with Hinckley, it was Ford himself who gave the appearance of being in violation of a social norm.

By 1981 the social deviate, even if discovered to be armed, is no longer an unfamiliar or even entirely frightening figure. Each month at the Nashville airport the police routinely arrest four or five people for carrying weapons. Most are set free on bond even though it is known that half will never return to face the charges against them. Hinckley was sent on his way within a few hours, like the others, being obliged only to put up a fifty-dollar bond and pay court costs of twelve dollars and fifty cents.

THE change of attitudes that benefited Hinckley can be traced at least in part to the 1960's. It was then that the misfit, especially in the figure of the young man who cannot adjust to the demands of society, was put forward as a culture hero. Recently, at John Lennon's death, it was claimed by his admirers that the Beatles had been instrumental in winning acceptance for the unattached, untrammeled new style of this figure, who offers a life-giving alternative to the repressiveness of bourgeois society and the violence that it supposedly spawns. Lennon's eulogists pointed out that the new style, along with "Beatlemania," had developed soon after the assassination of President Kennedy in 1963, and that both were in part responses to that event.

Insofar as Hinckley had a "lifestyle" it was that of the 1960's wanderer. Hinckley drifted through the Southwest with his guitar and "few possessions other than blue jeans, casual shirts, a tape-music player, and a dozen or so tapes." Alone in his motel and hotel rooms he surrounded himself with memorabilia from the 60's: photographs of Lee Harvey Oswald, newspaper and magazine accounts of Oswald's assassination of President Kennedy—and a newspaper clipping of song lyrics by John Lennon. Strumming his guitar while alone in one of these rooms on New Year's Eve, Hinckley made a tape recording which suggested that the recent shooting of his "idol," John Lennon, had shattered his equilibrium: "The dream is over as Lennon said ten years ago, but it's really over now."

Hinckley also identified with the disturbed drifter in the movie, *Taxi Driver*. "If there was more people like the character Robert De Niro played in the movie," he is reported to have said, "there wouldn't be any problem controlling crime." These strange words suggest a link in Hinckley's mind between the figure of the misfit and some ideal of social justice—a leftover part of the 1960's dream that he quite correctly found in *Taxi Driver*.

In the movie, the De Niro character is obsessed with the "scum" of night-time New York, especially its pimps and prostitutes. He determines to rescue a teen-age prostitute, played by Jody Foster, from her pimp. But at the same time he has been frustrated in his love for a presidential campaign worker. He arms himself and, alone in his room, fantasizes about setting everything right by assassinating the candidate. He shaves his head so as to leave a Mohawk Indian strip of hair down the middle, throws on his army fatigue jacket, and sets off for the candidate's next campaign stop. Here he loiters at the edge of the crowd until, just as he is about to draw his gun, he is chased away by a Secret Service agent whom he had accosted at a previous rally. It is not clear whether the agent has recognized him or has been alerted either by his bizarre appearance or by his reaching for a gun. As with Hinckley, though, it is certain that no one else in the crowd finds his appearance worthy of note.

A FEW years ago in *The Fall of Public Man* the sociologist Richard Sennett described a long-term shift in public behavior that goes some distance toward accounting for the contemporary assassination scene as pictured in *Taxi Driver* and repeated by Hinckley. In the 18th century, Sennett wrote, the life of the streets in the great cities of the West resembled outdoor theater. Members of all classes promenaded in public, displaying themselves to one another. The fashionable ones sported gorgeous costumes and vivid face paint, while the dress worn by the middle and lower classes advertised their occupations.

In the course of the 19th century most of this display was removed from the streets to the theater, while the kinds of emotions formerly expressed in public were transferred to the private arena of family life. In public, dress and behavior took on a sameness and sobriety, or at least an impersonality.

The results of the 19th-century shift to public restraint can still be observed in documentary film foot-

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age of crowds in the 1930's and 1940's. Here the thousands of people who fill the streets of cities are dressed virtually alike. In their dark shoes, overcoats, and hats they offer a vista of sobriety.

The 1960's, one may say, brought about a certain return to the public expressiveness of an earlier age. Lunchtime crowds displayed a colorful array of clothing and behaviors that remains visible to this day. But the return of expressive behavior did not bring back the earlier form of identification of social type by dress; in their own way the members of the modern crowd remain as anonymous in the 1980's as they were in the 1940's.

More important, they have lost something crucial. By their dress and deportment the crowds of the 40's indicated that they belonged to the middle class. Theirs was a universal desire to be seen as respectable members of society, and a universal willingness to appear, sometimes at considerable expense and discomfort, in a uniform that proclaimed that respectability. In the interim, the one social rule that everyone seems to have learned is above all to avoid the appearance of being middle class, or for that matter, respectable.

ACQUIESCING in the contempt of its critics, the middle class has come to accept the deviant as hero and learned to view mental disturbance as a sign of divine grace (at the same time regarding the policeman as villain and superintendence of the mentally disturbed as signifying a penchant for cruelty). In short, this is a class that, as evidenced by its self-denigrating views and self-effacing behavior in public, has suffered a precipitous decline in self-respect.

President Reagan nearly paid with his life for this loss. Outside the Hilton, when his assembled well-wishers and protectors were faced with John Hinckley's display of threatening behavior, they proved incapable of response.

The Mogul Who Loved Art

David Aberbach

IT IS rare that highly successful businessmen possess or are able to satisfy the urge to create art. The worlds of business and art demand such different talents and are each so separately absorbing that success in one would seem to decree failure or only minimal success in the other. Samuel Goldwyn, who was born a hundred years ago, was one of the few exceptions. The public image of Goldwyn as an enormous ego and purveyor of malapropisms, bad-tempered, dictatorial, and vain, who went out of his way to court the rich and famous, is largely accurate. At the same time, there was more than a touch of the artist in Goldwyn, and it was this unexpected combination of artistic instinct and shrewd business acumen which was responsible for Goldwyn's unparalleled success as an independent film producer.

T.S. Eliot wrote that he would have liked an audience for his plays that could neither read nor write so that their response to his work would be pure and unblunted by education. Goldwyn fulfilled this requirement. Unschooled though he was, he had a primitive, instinctual response to art which enabled him to judge, often without being able to explain why, if a work was good or bad and whether it was likely to succeed. To say that a film had the "Goldwyn touch" was—in his heyday—one of the greatest of compliments. That touch, as Alva Johnston described it, was not "brilliance or sensationalism," but rather "something that manifests itself gradually in a picture; the characters are consistent; the workmanship is honest; there are no tricks or short cuts; the intelligence of the audience is never insulted."

Goldwyn could often tell at a glance if an actress was right for a part or if a set had an air of authenticity. Though he could hardly remember his own address or the names of his associates, he had a prodigious memory for everything connected with films. At the same time, during the making of his films, he was immensely suggestible. He picked the brains of all around him, and was open to advice or criticism if not always acknowledging it. One of Goldwyn's executives described him as "the kind of man who, if he understands

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what you tell him, thinks he thought of it himself."

Goldwyn boasted that "I make my pictures to please myself" and he was a hard man to please. He made only a handful of films a year and was determined to spare no effort, hiring the best actors, writers, directors, technicians, and designers available, and possessing a remarkable gift—when he chose to use it—for getting them to work together as a team. He never made B-pictures, gangster, or exploitation films (not one of his films was ever censored) and he went to enormous lengths—and expense—to find good writers: "I'd hire the devil himself if he'd write me a good story," he once said. When he began to make sound pictures, he rehearsed fully before shooting began, though this was not the standard practice in Hollywood at the time. He had no hesitation about having a scene filmed over and over again until he got what he wanted. Sometimes this perfectionism went to extreme lengths. After spending over $400,000 on the first version of *Nana*, he decided that he didn't like it and scrapped it completely. In *Bulldog Drummond* (1928), his first sound picture, the opening scene is set in a posh dinner club where a waiter drops a spoon and someone exclaims, "What is the meaning of this infernal din?" After the scene was shot, Goldwyn saw it and asked what the word "din" meant. He had the set rebuilt and the actors rehired, at enormous cost, just to have the word "noise" substituted for the offending "din." In the end, he changed his mind and the original scene was used.

Goldwyn was one of only two outstandingly successful independent producers in Hollywood during its first half-century (the other was David Selznick). He took complete responsibility for his films, bearing the financial risk, choosing the scripts, casting the films, and virtually directing his directors. He also took charge of publicity and distribution. Still, he needed collaborators and did his best work with those who could separate his sense from his nonsense, and say no to the nonsense.

Goldwyn's readiness to spare no expense in getting the best is illustrated in one of his famous Goldwynisms. Advised not to buy a script because "it's too caustic," he replied: "To hell with the cost. If it's a good story, I'll make it." He is supposed to have told the novelist Edna Ferber that he would rather make a great artistic film than eat a good meal. On a visit to London, he tried to persuade Bernard Shaw to write for him. By Goldwyn's own account, Shaw turned him down, saying afterward, "There is only one difference between Mr. Goldwyn and me. Whereas he is after art, I am after money."

If Shaw's quip was meant with tongue in cheek, it also touched on the heart of Goldwyn's chief difficulty as a producer—his frustration and rage when he sensed something artistically wrong or missing in a film, but couldn't express it. This was one of the reasons he could not work with anyone on a truly equal basis: "It took a world of time to explain my plans to my associates," he once complained, and his press agent, Carl Brandt, wrote rather feelingly: "It is almost painful to see him groping, struggling, bludgeoning his way to clarity, agonizing over ideas he feels but cannot express . . . ."

ALTHOUGH Goldwyn's craving for publicity was notorious, next to nothing is known about his early life. A few bare facts and little more: born into an impoverished Jewish family in Warsaw, he ran away from home at twelve; came to England where he spent a couple of years with relatives in Birmingham; arrived in America in 1895 as Samuel Goldfish (he did not change his name to Goldwyn until 1918); worked in a sweatshop cutting gloves in upstate New York; became a traveling salesman selling gloves and made his fortune by 1910, when he married. Nothing is known of his forebears and practically nothing of his family or his early life in Poland. Judging from the fullest biography of Goldwyn to date, by Arthur Marx, even his original name, before he became Goldfish, and the exact date of his birth, are not publicly known.

It is clear, though, that his early life was wretched and that he must often have felt unwanted and unloved. Perhaps this is why he was so obsessed with publicity later on, and would go into paroxysms of rage if his name did not appear often enough in the press. (Sometimes his agents actually hired actors to pose as newspapermen and greet him with questions.) We know too that he experienced anti-Semitism as a child in Poland, and was so sensitive on the subject that he offered Budd Schulberg several hundred thousand dollars not to publish his novel *What Makes Sammy Run* during World War II on the grounds that it gave fuel to anti-Semites.

In his dictated memoirs, *Behind the Screens* (1923), Goldwyn tells even less about himself than we know from other sources. He omits to mention even that he was a Polish Jew by birth, leaving a rather Chaplinesque impression that he was born poor in England. Thus, he recalls the memory of "how once as a boy of twelve I wandered for a whole week through the streets of London with no more ardent guaranty of the future than a loaf of bread." Perhaps the strongest emotion in the book is the narrator's awe at having come so far. Goldwyn made his first fortune before World War I selling rights to his films in Europe. Describing his feelings at the time, he writes: "As I rode from Berlin to Paris my head reeled with the magnitude of our success. Could this really be I, the poor boy who a short time before had wandered over these very countries with hardly a sou in his pocket?" Several years later, after visiting H. G. Wells in London, he was similarly amazed: "As I left his home that day I remembered suddenly that twenty-five years before, I, who had just been entertained by the most celebrated of the younger English novelists, had wandered without home and without money through these very London streets." When he came to London in the 1950's to promote *Guys and Dolls*, he took a room at the Dorchester Hotel overlooking Hyde Park where, he claimed, he had once spent the night on a park

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bench. (Chaplin used to take a room at the Savoy overlooking Waterloo Bridge, which led in the direction of his dreary birthplace in south London.)

Goldwyn was fascinated by Chaplin, and his remarks about Chaplin's love of power and his need for independence and their roots in childhood trauma are true of Goldwyn himself:

> Those early years of his in London when, the son of poor vaudeville artists, he experienced hunger and tragedy and the constant terror of the next day, have driven far into his brain. No prosperity can quite rid him of fear. That is why he wants to assure himself in every way of his present strength. For what is it but fear which makes a man conscious always of the thickness of his armor, the sharpness of his weapons?

Films, Goldwyn writes, made up for his own unhappy boyhood. He describes what they meant to him: "an impersonal interest so vivid and compelling that it survives any personal grief or maladjustment."

Films gave Goldwyn the means both to blot out and to confront the wretchedness of his youth. Hating poverty and suffering, he gave lavishly to charity but always preferred films about beauty to films about squalor—sometimes going to comic lengths in this preference. Thus, when making *Dead End* in the 1930's, he built an expensive replica of the riverfront slums of New York's East Side (he did not shoot on location in order to maintain full control over the production) but refused to allow any dirt in the setting. He had paid several hundred thousand dollars for that set, Goldwyn complained, and he didn't want it dirty. In the same way, he could bear only so much misery in his films. When making *Wuthering Heights*, he had the ending changed, to the chagrin of his director, William Wyler, and showed Heathcliff and Catherine reunited in heaven.

It is interesting, though, that Goldwyn's outstanding films were the serious and sometimes somber ones (though not without their lighter moments). Almost in spite of himself, his attitude that life is a hard struggle is reflected in his films, and in the way they were made. Comedy was never his strong point and even the films he did with such comic talents as Eddie Cantor, Bob Hope, and Danny Kaye were not among his best.

Poverty also drove Goldwyn to develop a highly effective selling style. He had the aggressiveness, the imagination, the persistence bred of desperation, and the confidence of a gambler who knows that he can never fall lower than he has already been. He was at his best in crisis. When his fortunes were at their lowest ebb, in the days before the Armistice in 1918, Goldwyn was cheerful at the prospect of fighting for survival. When things went well, he was often less cheerful. He claimed that he was not naturally a fighter, but had forced himself to become one, like his hero, Theodore Roosevelt.

He was also the craftiest of businessmen, verging on larceny. In his early days in the glove business he dreamed up a scheme for importing expensive French gloves into the United States without paying import duties. He had the right and left gloves packed in separate crates, and addressed each crate to a fictitious name in some American port city. On arrival, the unclaimed crates with their useless contents would be put up for auction by the customs service. Naturally, there would be no other bidders except Goldwyn, who knew where the mates were to be found, so he would pick up the whole shipment for a song.

In his pre-movie days, many of Goldwyn's customers had been recent immigrants like himself and he quite naturally spoke Yiddish to them, of the most colorful kind. Probably his later reputation for mangling the English language—with his self-contradictory turns of phrase and his flair for the oxymoronic—derived, in part, from his use of Yiddish, which is a treasure of the paradoxical and the illogical. How much of this was calculated and how much spontaneous we will never know, since the classical Goldwynisms like "include me out" and "in two words: im possible" eventually became so popular that Goldwyn paid writers to turn them out. (For what it is worth, interviewers in later years were impressed, and perhaps disappointed, by the correctness and clarity of Goldwyn's English.)

Whether original or not, most of the famous Goldwynisms do give the flavor of the man—they share an element of non sequitur or madcap twist. Thus, when Goldwyn was suing the British film producer, Alexander Korda (lawsuits were a regular feature of his career), Korda happened to be in Hollywood. To Korda's surprise, Goldwyn invited him to dinner. "How can we have dinner when you're suing me?" Korda asked. "What's one thing got to do with the other?" Goldwyn answered.

One of the most quoted Goldwynisms occurred when Goldwyn was warned against filming *The Children's Hour* because it was about lesbians. "Don't worry," he replied, "we'll make them Americans." Again, after hearing André Previn's orchestration of Gershwin's music for the film version of *Porgy and Bess*, Goldwyn, overcome by emotion, told Previn, "You should be goddammed proud, kid—you should never do another thing in your life." This was typical of Goldwyn—the spirit was there, but the words did not quite match.

Some Goldwynisms were only superficially illogical, however. He once fell asleep while a writer was describing an idea for a film. The writer shook him awake, declaring that all he wanted was Goldwyn's opinion. Goldwyn replied, "Isn't sleeping an opinion?" In short, though it served him to play the part on occasion, Goldwyn was certainly no buffoon. He was tall and distinguished looking, always immaculately dressed (he carried nothing in his pockets, lest it spoil the line of his suits), and charming to those who might be useful to him (an acquaintance said he would charm the socks off you and then step on your toes).

The circumstances of Goldwyn's

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entry into films were as remarkable as his escape from Europe to the New World. Here, too, everything hung on his vision of a new life—for films as for himself—and his faith that taking great risks would be rewarded in the end with success. Today, of course, it does not seem very daring to invest in a movie, but it did in 1913, when the future of motion pictures looked very chancy indeed. Films in those days were made chiefly for showing in vaudeville houses between the acts and their purpose was not even to entertain customers but to drive them out and make room for new ones (for this reason they were known as "chasers").

NEVERTHELESS, Goldwyn was so convinced that films could be the main attraction to an audience—if they were good enough—that he talked his brother-in-law, the vaudeville producer Jesse Lasky, into the idea of making a feature film. They hired an actor, bought the rights to a novel, *The Squaw Man*, and then went looking for a director. Goldwyn, displaying his characteristic audacity in going straight for the best, first tried to get D.W. Griffith to direct the film, but the great man was skeptical, pointing out that Goldwyn had never made a film before. Goldwyn is supposed to have replied that this was his "strongest weakpoint," since Griffith would have complete control. In the end, Griffith turned him down and Goldwyn settled for a friend of Lasky's who had had no experience with films whatever, a young playwright named Cecil B. de Mille.

By the end of 1913, they were ready. The venture seemed on the face of it mad: to gamble a huge sum of money on a director who had never directed a film before, with no prepared script and only one actor, to be shot on location in Arizona, where the fledgling crew were hoping to find Indians and other extras to assist in the proceedings. But no sooner had the train pulled out (from Grand Central) than Goldwyn turned to the task of learning about film distribution. With his formidable selling powers he stirred up so much enthusiasm for the film—and others already being planned for the future—that within a few days he had raised about $50,000.

Miraculously, the film was actually made (in Hollywood, rather than Arizona) and proved an instant, spectacular success when it was shown on the East Coast. Thus launched, Goldwyn's career rocketed within a few months with a string of successes. By the end of 1916 he was practically a millionaire, at which point—again, characteristically—he was voted out of the company he had helped to form. He was a hard man to work with, dynamic and highly capable, but often childish, cantankerous, and unwilling to share control. "A producer shouldn't get ulcers," he once said. "He should give them."

CLEARLY Goldwyn's ruthlessness and hunger for power were in proportion to the insecurity and powerlessness of his childhood. Goldwyn described himself as a lone wolf and a rebel—"I was always an independent, even when I had partners"—and, in the end, he became the most successful independent producer in the business. Toward the end of his career, he fought and won a long court battle against the huge film companies whose monopoly over the movie houses prevented the independents from showing their films. He was unnaturally stubborn. Just as he had broken with his family, he eventually broke with all his partners—including, at various times, Lasky, Adolph Zukor, Chaplin, Douglas Fairbanks, Mary Pickford, and Alexander Korda (incidentally, his name in the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Corporation was a fossil of one such partnership; in fact, he had nothing to do with the films made by MGM). Always he functioned best as his own boss, his self-sufficiency making up for his insecurity.

So far as the creative side of filmmaking was concerned, Goldwyn's partners in the early days, Lasky and Zukor, were not far wrong in refusing to take him seriously. He was such a naïf at first that when de Mille started filming faces in shadow for artistic effect, Goldwyn objected that if the film distributors saw only half a face they would pay only half the price. Traces of this gaucherie—or perversity—remained throughout Goldwyn's career. He was offered the chance, for instance, to buy the film rights to Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, but emphatically turned it down when he heard the novel was not yet finished: "What is that Hemingway trying to do—rob me?"

BUT as the years passed, this crudeness gradually wore off: Goldwyn educated himself in the arts and his natural taste developed. He saw as much theater as he could, both in America and abroad, and was a regular operagoer with his own box at the Metropolitan. On trips to Europe, he made frequent pilgrimages to the great art galleries and eventually became a collector. He had a taste for European avant-garde cinema—it was he who brought classics like *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* to America—but cared little for actors, famous though they might have been, preferring the company of artists and intellectuals. Like many self-made men, he also had a snobbish streak and was not above associating himself with a name or title for its own sake: once he tried to hire an ancient British aristocrat to work as story editor in his London office; another time he invited Freud to Hollywood to write a film script about psychoanalysis; most blatantly of all, he gave Franklin D. Roosevelt's son, James, a sinecure as a vice-president of his company. At the same time, he had a sharp, intuitive knowledge of psychology, particularly useful in dealing with actors. At one point, for example, he had two rival prima donnas, Pauline Frederick and Geraldine Ferrar, under contract to him at hefty salaries, and the two were fiercely jealous of each other. One day—so the story goes—Pauline Frederick walked into Goldwyn's office and dropped a script on his desk, with the words, "I hate it." Goldwyn, without missing a beat, called in an assistant, and chastised him for giving the script to the wrong actress. "This was supposed

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to go to Miss Ferrar." Instantly, Pauline Frederick changed her mind and decided to have another look at the script.

Despite his natural intelligence, Goldwyn was a poor reader who preferred a synopsis to an entire work. "I read part of it all the way through," he once told a luckless writer, and it supposedly took him a whole week to read *The Wizard of Oz*, which the average reader could get through in a couple of hours (he did not make the film in the end but sold the rights to MGM). Goldwyn bought the film rights to Thurber's story, "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty," on the basis of a synopsis, and later apologized to the author for his screen treatment of the work, saying that it was " too blood and thirsty." Thurber agreed: "I was horror and struck." Had Goldwyn actually read the story, he might have made a better film.

IN GENERAL, Goldwyn's films reflected his own interests—he believed that what he liked the public would also like, and on the whole he was right. Few of his silent films are remembered today, but he made stars of Ronald Colman, Vilma Banky, and Gary Cooper, and some of his films, including *The Eternal City, Stella Dallas, The Dark Angel,* and *The Winning of Barbara Worth,* are still admired by students of cinema. From *Bulldog Drummond* (1928) through *Porgy and Bess* (1959), his last picture, Goldwyn made movies uninterruptedly for a total of thirty years. During that time, his stars included the likes of Laurence Olivier, Bette Davis, Humphrey Bogart, Merle Oberon, and David Niven. Perhaps his most ambitious —and certainly his most successful —film was *The Best Years of Our Lives,* which was awarded the Oscar for the best film in 1947 and also the Best Producer award.

Along with his many successes and discoveries, there were also some blunders. After making *The Winning of Barbara Worth,* he let Gary Cooper go over to Paramount; he passed up Greta Garbo (she was too peasantish and her feet were too big) and Clark Gable (his ears stuck out); and although he had Lucille Ball on his payroll as a Goldwyn Girl, he never recognized her comic genius. Then there was the fiasco of making a silent film starring the opera star Mary Garden, and the prolonged debacle of three movies with the Russian actress Anna Sten who could hardly speak English. But in spite of such mistakes, many of his films proved to be of lasting interest and importance, especially those directed by William Wyler and written by Sidney Howard or Lillian Hellman, like *Dodsworth, Wuthering Heights, The Little Foxes, Dead End,* and *The Best Years of Our Lives.*

GOLDWYN'S life was a classic American success story. By the time of his death in 1974, he was a legend. In ways both admirable and otherwise, he typified many of the Eastern European Jewish immigrants who came to the United States at the end of the 19th century. As one who had been an impoverished Polish Jewish child born into a troubled family, he brought a knowledge of life's brutality to the make-believe world of Hollywood. His arrogance and ruthlessness complemented his creative drive and imagination.

His best films were essentially the work of a realist who, though tempted by fantasy and escapism, preferred to look life in the eye. In the end, though, his greatest creation was Goldwyn the showman, colorful, insouciant, aristocratic, whose name was a virtual guarantee of good entertainment and, at times, even of art.

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Books in Review

Futurist Manifesto

THE WORLD CHALLENGE. By JEAN-JACQUES SERVAN-SCHREIBER. Translated by MARTIN SOKOLINSKY, ELIZABETH BARTELME, and LEON KING. *Simon & Schuster. 280 pp. $14.95.*

Reviewed by ROGER STARR

JEAN-JACQUES SERVAN-SCHREIBER is a French futurist, carrying on a profession that got off the ground when Joseph accurately forecast the course of fourteen years of the Egyptian economy. Though related, futurism is not to be confused with simple fortune-telling; in our time it has become considerably more respectable, engaging the talents of some of our cleverest contemporaries, including Herman Kahn of the Hudson Institute, Wolf Häfele of the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, Isaac Asimov, an independent and witty peerer into the future of television screens and computers, and Alvin Toffler, whose specialty is theorizing about the psychic effects of rapid technological and cultural change.

Of course all related professions have their secrets. Fortune-tellers protect themselves against palpable error by couching their predictions in such mystic and ambiguous language that their clients are unable to tell for certain whether the predictions came true. Futurists also protect themselves, usually by looking so far ahead that they can be reasonably certain the lifetime of their readers will not be long enough to put their choices to the test of reality.

Not so with Servan-Schreiber of ten years or so ago. With Gallic élan, he made sure that his earlier book, *The American Challenge*, was clear and precise in its discussion of the world economy. In that volume, the author simply said that American mastery of industrial management was so complete and advanced that America was about to assert its unquestionable economic control of the whole world. People had only to survive *The American Challenge* by a few years to find out that, in fact, the Japanese were on the verge of taking American mastery of management to bits, and reducing the American challenge to the size of a peashooter.

Perhaps sobered by this experience, Servan-Schreiber has been more careful in his new book, *The World Challenge*, to make somewhat vaguer his prophecy of what is going to happen. Rather than pure futurism, the book is a warning to the nations of the North to share their technology—whatever those words may mean in general—with the poorer nations of the South. Something very bad will happen if the Northerners refuse, though just what, Servan-Schreiber doesn't say, not even in his capacity as head of a mysterious collection of world intellectual leaders called the Paris Group.

In fact, the reader is left in the dark about what will happen if the North balks. He is also not told what good things will follow upon acquiescence, except that the world will be New and One. Presumably, the North will also cease to be guilty. For it has, among other acts of heinous selfishness, been stealing the resources of Saudi Arabia and other deserving poor folk in the Third World and (until recently) giving them ludicrously low prices in return.

A truly cantankerous reviewer might argue the opposite, suggesting that the countries of the South have wealth and power today only because smart folks in the now industrialized nations invented a little number called the internal combustion engine. That, in turn, created a market for the dirty black stuff that had been lying unused and unnoticed in the sands below the Southern feet. The low price was not a steal, but nothing more than a market price determined by the balance of supply and demand, and that, again in turn, was largely determined by the very similar price at which America, nearer to the market demanders, was willing to sell its own oil.

Nor could an ill-tempered reviewer accept the notion that the North held back its technology. Without, indeed, having made immense use of that technology in the South, the North would have found no way to remove the oil from its resting place. In fact, it is precisely because the North is not now transferring its oil-extracting technology to the Russians that it is rapped across the knuckles several times in Servan-Schreiber's book, particularly by quotations attributed, accurately I believe, to the American businessman Samuel Pisar, one of the few Americans to be referred to in glowing terms throughout. But if the North is to be damned for not using its technology to aid Russian oil extraction, surely it should be praised for having made the same science abundantly available to those in the South who had been unable to devise it for themselves.

The real proof adduced by Servan-Schreiber for Northern unworthiness does not, however, lie in any such specific acts of malfeasance. The North is found wanting on the moral plane, in comparison with the statesmen of the South. The author tells us that the leaders of OPEC raised their prices to levels that menace the world economy not from greed, and certainly not from any desire to live in the grandiose, materialistic manner of the North. Instead, in a manner wholly foreign to the shopkeeper mentality, they want to sell their oil in order to pass the proceeds along to the poor nations of the South that unfortunately have no oil of their own.

All this has been established beyond cavil, writes Servan-Schreiber, in the Taif agreement, a document penned by the OPEC ministers and their staffs in a mountain village of that name in Saudi Arabia. In luminous prose, the ministers agreed: "With the other developing countries, we will shape a common, overall program for a new world order, to be negotiated with the in-

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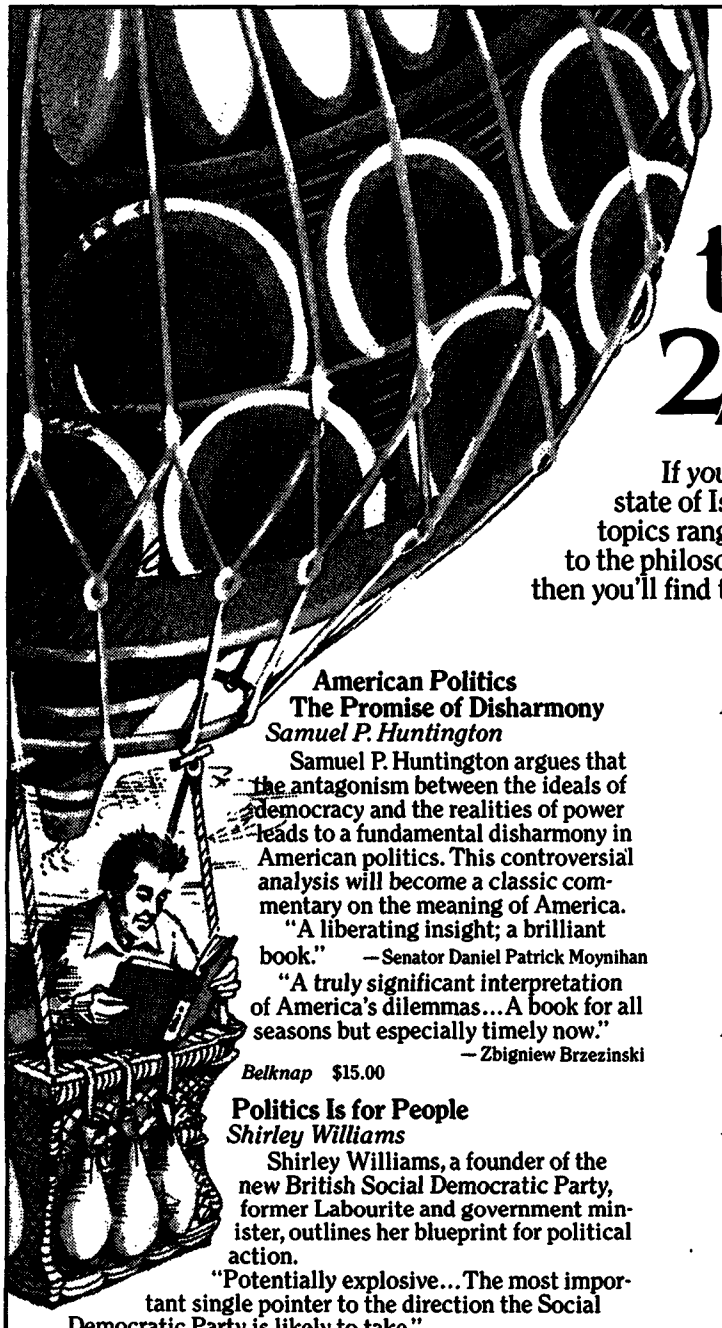

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dustrialized nations." Beside such prose, deeds fade.

Still, some of those developing nations, grossly in debt to Northern banks and to the International Monetary Fund, all their economies slammed in the face by the rocketing rise in OPEC's energy prices, even if the latter have been impelled by OPEC's altruism, must ask themselves if they can use copies of the Taif agreement to pay their bills. Servan-Schreiber does not seek to bolster the Taif case by reciting the contributions, if any, made to Tanzania, or Somalia, or even any help given to Afghanistan with which its resistance movement might be armed against the new colonial oppressor from the North. No mention is made either of the disappointing results of Israel's strenuous efforts to share its technology with underdeveloped African and Asian countries.

In fact, the major references to Israel are found in a discussion of former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. Without citing the sources of his information, Servan-Schreiber assures us that Kissinger knew in advance of the forthcoming Egyptian attack on Israel on Yom Kippur, 1973. Further, he told Golda Meir and other Israeli leaders about it. In doing so, however, he made them pledge to do nothing to resist the attack by a preemptive strike because the "geopolitical situation" of 1973 was inhospitable. Those words, we are informed, were used to hide a plot so complicated that one quails at retelling it, but in broad outline, the purpose was to allow the Shah of Iran to raise his oil prices so that he would become a friend of America, while frightening (how?) the Saudi Arabians into a more complaisant attitude on oil prices charged to the United States.

LACKING his own anonymous sources in the Middle East, this reviewer is unable to refute Servan-Schreiber's facts and theories. They bear, in sum, a curious resemblance to the global conspiracies that were common in the detective stories of the late Edgar Wallace, and seem to come similarly untied at the end. In any case, while the rest of us were sitting at home, believing what we read in the newspapers or our favorite magazines, Servan-Schreiber was traveling around the world gathering the facts with which he regales us here. When the oil ministers went to Taif to endorse their monumentally moral position, Servan-Schreiber was there. He tells us: "In the calm atmosphere of Taif, the oil ministers are unpacking their bags. Each man's briefcase contains a personal [*sic*] copy of a secret report on which they have labored for two years." He must also have been present in London when the young and future Colonel Qaddafi, then training with the British, visited Les Ambassadeurs for a night on the town. There, disgusted by the spectacle of English people of both sexes playing roulette with a Greek shipowner who was a friend of the then king of Libya, the colonel-to-be underwent a moment of intense religious experience.

Even more impressively, Servan-Schreiber penetrated to the very heart of Saudi Arabia's intelligence apparatus, headed by Turki Feisal, second son of that nation's monarch. This person is described in the glowing terms reserved by the author for Southern leaders: "Turki Feisal can work without being disturbed. . . . Turki Faisal has a warm personality; his manners are simple, straightforward. Interested in everything, he keeps abreast by endless reading. He clearly believes that Saudi Arabia is the guardian of a world and that its responsibilities grow with each passing day." Others who win the accolade of Servan-Schreiber's mellifluous prose include a Kuwaiti protégé of Sheikh Yamani, the famed Saudi oil minister: "Kuwait's leaders sent Sheikh Ali to California before he was twenty. He returned home confident, sensing the world's economic future. Ali came back with one dominant concern: to build a new economic system that would replace the old one—and to build it fast, to avert collapse. Sheik Ali believed that 'industries of the future' had to be created as soon as inventions emerged from the laboratories." (It is not clear whose laboratories he was talking about, but there is no evidence they were in Kuwait.)

The scene shifts to Japan. Now homage is paid to Soichiro Honda, the man who made the motorcycle famous. Mr. Honda's "little place in Tokyo's green suburb looks like a dollhouse" to Servan-Schreiber, who continues: ". . . there are never more than five or six people around his table. He himself composes the menu. . . . All during the meal he gives a running comment on the dishes. He talks about several things at once, without losing the thread of any of them. Conversation with him is dazzling." Precisely.

IT TURNS out that many of these praiseworthy characters, including Samuel Pisar, are members of Servan-Schreiber's Paris Group (how Edgar Wallace would have loved that name). Its purpose, the leader tells us, is to form "a team of men methodically seeking a new direction for a world paralyzed by fear."

All this grandiosity leaves the reader agog while he wonders what direction the new direction is. What does the author mean? How will it work? We dart around history at the same breakneck speed with which Servan-Schreiber circles the globe, spinning from vignettes of the sinking of the American destroyer *Reuben James* in 1941 to the 1980 meeting of the Paris Group at which Professor Herbert Giersh, president of the Kiel Institute, tells the members that "only a public from whom one hides nothing of the truth will be capable of gathering the courage and will to act to pave the way for *the renaissance of a unified world*" (emphasis in original).

These are the lines that stir Servan-Schreiber's soul, and keep him from being specific about what he recommends. Gradually, the reader comes to feel that the Paris Group expects some future American Secretary of State to develop a new Marshall plan that will send micro-processing computers to the South. What the South will do with them remains obscure, despite Servan-Schreiber's thumbnail biography of Leibniz, his description of the origins of calculus, and his exposure of the secrets of binary arithmetic. There is a hint that computers will enable Indians to

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predict the onset of the monsoon with pinpoint accuracy, putting to shame the underequipped television weathermen of the North who make such a hash of the following day's climate. But aside from the monsoon prediction, which through some mysterious communications miracle will permit hundreds of millions of Indians to get their seeds into the ground at the very right moment, it is not clear what the South will do with all the other electrically-powered machinery. Maybe it can be stored somewhere in Dr. Schweitzer's old hospital at Lambaréné.

Possibly, however, Servan-Schreiber understands, like Samuel Pisar, that the immediate beneficiary of the micro-processing Marshall plan will be the Soviet Union. Its Siberian oil will flow like a spring. There is just a hint of another immediate benefaction to the Soviet Union in a manifesto from the Paris Group: *"The wrong target, remilitarization instead of computerization, will inevitably lead to weakness instead of the new creative power for which America, more than any other nation, has the adequate scientific potential and social resources"* (entire passage emphasized). It does seem strange that while the Paris Group urges the United States not to catch up with Russia's military expansion, the South, of which Saudi Arabia is a case in point, is seeking not micro-computers but maxi-AWACS. Perhaps in his next book Servan-Schreiber will explain that too.

Jesus as Jew

REVOLUTION IN JUDEA: JESUS AND THE JEWISH RESISTANCE. By HYAM MACCOBY. *Taplinger. 256 pp. $9.95.*

Reviewed by HILLEL HALKIN

PRIOR to the Enlightenment, Christian authors almost always minimized the Jewishness of Jesus, while Jewish sources regarded him either as an all-too-human impostor or else as an agent of the devil, and were indisposed in either case to make fine distinctions between him and the church that arose in his name. "Reclaiming" Jesus for the Jews (the phrase seems to have been coined by Harry Wolfson) is thus a modern enterprise—though by now it has a history of nearly two hundred years. Christian scholars began it. Yet as early as 1838, relates Albert Schweitzer in his still magisterial *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, a French Jew named Salvator, following in the footsteps of the German Karl Heinrich Venturini, asserted in a work called *Jésus-Christ et sa doctrine* that the man-God of Christianity was in fact an Essene in good standing who sought to ennoble Judaism rather than supplant it. The list of works subsequently written by both Jews and Gentiles to prove that Jesus lived and died as a loyal Jew, and never meant to found the religion that falsified his teachings and recast them in an anti-Jewish mold, is a long one.

But if a loyal Jew, what sort of Judaism was he loyal to? We know that during the late Second Temple period in which Jesus lived, the Jewish community of Palestine was far from united in practice and belief, and the schematic division of it by the historian Josephus into four principal sects—the Sadducees, the Pharisees, the Essenes, and the Zealots—remains serviceable to this day. A Sadducee Jesus most certainly was not; it is hardly imaginable that this party of aristocrats and priests, with its devotion to state religion and the ceremonial Temple cult, its rejection of personal immortality and judgment, and its clear class bias in favor of the rich, could have produced anything like the figure we are familiar with from the Gospels.

As for the remaining possibilities, modern Gentile scholars were divided from the start, as were the two leading 19th-century Jewish historians, Heinrich Graetz and Abraham Geiger. Graetz, like Salvator, held that Jesus was an Essene, since the otherworldliness of this ascetic desert sect, as well as its practice of baptism, made it seem a likely background for his career. Geiger, on the other hand, main-

HILLEL HALKIN, a writer and critic, *is the author of* Letters to an American Jewish Friend: A Zionist's Polemic.

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tained that, despite his attacks on it, Jesus belonged to the party of the Pharisees, as was evidenced by the great similarity of his parables and sayings to those found in rabbinic texts.

Both the Essene and the Pharisee hypotheses have continued to enjoy wide currency to this day: if the former was dramatized by the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which cast great light on the Essene community and showed it to have been in the grip of eschatological expectations no less urgent than those of Jesus himself, the latter has been steadily buttressed by decades of research in both the Gospels and early Pharisaic literature, whose styles of thought and expression are undeniably close. At the same time, however, a third hypothesis has been broached: namely, that while Jesus could well have been a Pharisee by education and general outlook, he also had much in common with Josephus' "fourth sect," the Zealots—that is, with that faction of militant Jewish nationalists who preached active resistance to Roman rule and led the Great Revolt of 67 C.E. that culminated disastrously in the destruction of the Temple. The suggestion that Jesus was an anti-Roman rebel may seem startling to the serious student and the casual reader of the Gospels alike, yet in recent years three books have been written in English to propose it, the latest of which, Hyam Maccoby's *Revolution in Judea*, first published in England in 1973, has now been issued in an American edition.

BRIEFLY stated, Maccoby's thesis is as follows:

Jesus must have sought to lead an anti-Roman uprising, since otherwise he would never have been executed by the Romans as "king of the Jews." The story in the Gospels of a weak-minded Pontius Pilate letting himself be pressured by a Jewish mob into crucifying him for no good reason is patently absurd. Indeed, only by assuming that Jesus' crime was rebellion is it possible to understand many details in the Gospels that are otherwise inexplicable, such as the presence among his followers of several men with names suggesting that they were Zealots; the incendiary remark attributed to him that "I have come not to bring peace but the sword"; his violent assault on the Temple; his supposedly ordering his disciples to arm themselves on the night of his arrest; the information that an "insurrection" took place in Jerusalem during his own last days there; etc.

None of these items, or others pointing to the same conclusion, claims Maccoby, makes sense if one accepts the traditional Christian portrait of a pacific messiah who had no political aims and whose kingdom was not of this world. On the contrary, Jesus' success in convincing his disciples of his messianic mission is itself proof of his anti-Roman activism, since the con-

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temporary Jewish concept of messiahship was predicated upon belief in an individual who would free Israel from foreign bondage, and could not possibly have applied to anyone declining this role.

Why then is the Jesus portrayed in the Gospels so unlike the actual "apocalyptic Pharisee" who was crucified for leading a popular insurrection in Jerusalem? Because, answers Maccoby, all four Gospels are deliberate reworkings of the Jesus story in order to render it palatable to the growing Christian communities of the Roman empire, which—especially after the failure of the Great Revolt and the wave of anti-Jewish sentiment that followed it—had a crucial interest in suppressing the fact of Jesus' militant Jewishness and in shifting the blame for his death from the Romans to the Jews. Paradoxical though it may seem, the Christianity of the New Testament was concerned above all with effacing the historical career of its own savior, which was a source of acute embarrassment to it. And precisely because such a rewriting of history took place, any reconstruction of the actual events must be based on whatever isolated details filtered through about the real Jesus of Nazareth, the Galilean insurgent who sought not to save mankind from sin but to free his own people from Roman subjugation.

THESE are the bare bones of Maccoby's book, which is ably fleshed out and would undoubtedly have made a greater impact had it not been anticipated by two earlier works: Joel Carmichael's *The Death of Jesus*, which appeared in 1962, and S.G.F. Brandon's *Jesus and the Zealots*, which was published in 1967. Indeed, despite the great differences of style among them (Carmichael's account is straightforwardly popular, Brandon's is immensely erudite, and Maccoby's falls somewhere between the two), all three books are so similar in substance that their thesis can be regarded as a single one.

True, Maccoby does have his own viewpoint. He is more concerned than either Brandon or Carmichael with defending Pharisaic Judaism against the New Testament's assaults on it, which gives his book an apologetic character absent in theirs, and some of his explanations of puzzling episodes in the Gospels, such as of the Barabbas story or of the transfiguration on the mount, are cleverly original if not necessarily convincing. Nevertheless, it is puzzling and regrettable that he refers to Brandon only in passing and to Carmichael not at all. (Brandon, in his massively footnoted study, does not allude to Carmichael once, while in his own book, which has no footnotes at all, Carmichael fails to mention that the likelihood of Jesus' having been an anti-Roman rebel was already raised in the 18th century by Hermann Samuel Remarus, the grandfather of modern New Testament criticism. Perhaps in a historical field that has produced a mountain of literature that no scholar can be expected to read, let alone remember, in its entirety, allowances for such lapses must be made.)

In any case, what matters about the Carmichael-Brandon-Maccoby hypothesis, as by now it should be called, is not who deserves credit for it but whether it stands up to scrutiny and offers a more satisfying reconstruction of Jesus' career than do the more familiar Essene and Pharisee hypotheses which, while rejecting the New Testament's dejudaization of Jesus, nevertheless do accept its non-political and pacifistic portrait of him. Certainly it is a highly imaginative approach, both in its overall perspective and in its ability to slash through some of the knottiest conundrums of New Testament scholarship and resolve them in boldly novel ways. And yet—though here I must stress that I write as a layman who lacks the technical competence to judge many of the textual and linguistic issues involved—it does raise to my mind at least three major sets of difficulties.

The first of these has to do with the Romans. If Jesus arrived in Jerusalem from the Galilee shortly before the Passover (or before the Feast of Tabernacles, as Maccoby and others propose) with the plan of fomenting armed insurrection there, and if his "cleansing of the Temple," as the Carmichael-Brandon-Maccoby hypothesis holds, is really the Gospels' censored version of this attempt, the Romans' reaction to it is hardly comprehensible. Why were Jesus and his rebel forces not apprehended on the spot instead of being allowed to wander in and out of the city unmolested for several more days? The explanation given by the Gospels, and accepted by our three authors, namely, that the delay was caused by Roman fear of Jesus' popularity with the Jerusalem mob, hardly makes sense if he was already leading this mob in open rebellion. Did the Romans think that the uprising would go away by itself? And if it was such a major one that they initially lacked the troops to quell it, why is it not mentioned by Josephus?

Why, when Jesus was arrested, were his disciples not taken into custody too if they were armed rebels like himself? Why, if his offense was insurrection, did the Romans prefer to have the Jewish religious authorities interrogate him first instead of dealing with him directly themselves? The way a Roman governor, especially one with a reputation for cruelty like Pontius Pilate, might have been expected to behave toward an insurgency in Jerusalem would have been to seize all its members as quickly as possible, pass summary judgment on them, and execute them to a man—and it is puzzling, to say the least, why Pilate should have behaved so differently in this case.

SECONDLY, there is the question of textual economy. It may be that the Carmichael-Brandon-Maccoby hypothesis makes clear certain passages in the Gospels that were formerly obscure, but in so doing it renders obscure a far greater number of passages that were formerly clear. What is gained, for example, by being able to interpret literally a statement like "I have come not to bring peace but the sword" if one is forced in exchange to lose much or most of the sermon on the mount, with its message of "resist not evil" and "turn the other cheek"?

Of course, it can be claimed that the former dictum is a genuine say-

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ing of Jesus that slipped through the web of later Christian censorship, while the latter remarks were invented by the censors themselves. Yet if this censorship was so cunning and creative that it succeeded within a short time in obliterating the historical Jesus and palming off a believably new one in his place, how is one to explain its innocently letting such obviously incriminating passages pass? And if much of the teaching of this fabricated Jesus was the invention of later individuals, is it not strange that the three Synoptic Gospels, which were composed several decades after Jesus' death, and within a few years of each other, by different authors, each apparently with sources of his own besides the common ones, should have managed to invent the same man? No theory, however ingenious, that creates more textual problems than it solves can be above serious suspicion.

Finally, there is the general issue of the origins of early Christianity. Certainly there is every reason to believe that the teachings of the first apostles to the Gentiles must have differed from those of Jesus himself, and that this difference involved, among other things, a deemphasis of the Jewish context of Jesus' career. It is one thing, however, to argue that the founders of Christianity tailored Jesus' message to meet the exigencies of their own situation, which would have been perfectly normal for them to do. It is another to assert, as does the Carmichael-Brandon-Maccoby hypothesis, that they totally reversed it, turning the militant instigator of a popular anti-Roman revolt into the secretive, enigmatic figure of the Gospels who prefers parables and paradoxes to plain language and preaches inward repentance and spiritual preparedness for the kingdom of heaven that is to come. Surely there must have been *something* about the real Jesus to suggest the version of him that we find in the New Testament!

No doubt our three authors are right to point out that, for 1st-century Palestinian Jews, the coming of the kingdom of heaven did mean deliverance from pagan rule; so too they make a strong case for their claim that the disciples of Jesus who founded the Nazarene church in Jerusalem, which was apparently wiped out in the Great Revolt, were themselves Jewish patriots who quarreled with Paul and the overseas apostles over the latter's anti-Jewish line; but from this to the conclusion that the authors of the New Testament were knowingly writing or subscribing to blatant fictions is still a perilous leap. Paul himself, after all, though he never met Jesus in the flesh, knew many people who had, and presumably conversed with them about him; is it not reasonable to assume a connection, however skewed, between the Jesus of his own theology and visions and the man he was told about? Why else would he,

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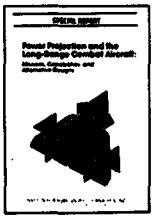

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According to the author, the Rapid Deployment Force (RDF), formed by the Carter Administration in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, is incapable of fulfilling its principal mission: the preservation of U.S. access to the vital energy resources of the Persian Gulf. He analyzes the conceptual, structural, logistical and organizational weaknesses of the present RDF in the context of the obstacles to successful military intervention in that logistically remote region, and outlines an alternative vehicle for deterrence and defense in the Gulf. 1981. viii, 82 pp. $7.50 (Hardcover, $12.00).

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The author examines the remarkable rise of the Soviet Navy and the drive by the USSR for maritime hegemony on a global basis. He shows how that drive has centered primarily on restricted passages along the world's shipping lanes – "choke points" – a pattern of maritime control not unlike that developed by the Royal Navy in the heyday of the British Empire. The threat posed by Soviet naval power is then analyzed in light of Western, especially American, naval strengths and weaknesses. 1980. xi, 65 pp. $6.50 (Hardcover, $10.00).

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and others of his generation like him who still had access to eyewitnesses, have been attracted to the figure of Jesus in the first place?

UNPROVABLE though it is, however, and despite all the question marks that it raises, the Carmichael-Brandon-Maccoby hypothesis cannot be disproved either. Indeed if one begins by assuming, as all modern New Testament criticism does, that the life and teachings of Jesus went through some kind of basic editing while becoming Christian scripture, one is forced to agree with the conclusion reached by Schweitzer that the quest for the historical Jesus is an ultimate cul-de-sac. To put it in simple arithmetical terms, we are dealing here with four elements: (1) the original Jesus and his teachings; (2) what was added to these by the authors of the Gospels; (3) what was subtracted by them; and (4) the Gospels themselves. Of these only the fourth is given in advance, and needless to say, for the equation a+b—c=d, where d alone is known, no solution is remotely possible.

Does this mean that "reclaiming" Jesus for the Jews is a purposeless task? I do not think so. In the first place, that Jesus was thoroughly a Jew in his behavior and beliefs, and that the Gospels play down this side of him, is a textually establishable fact regardless of our inability to determine just what kind of a Jew he was, or, for that matter, whether his Judaism may not have been so idiosyncratic as to elude exact classification. And while such an assertion may appear to be a truism by now, it is one whose implications still need to be explored. How else can we hope to find meaning—historical, psychological, or any other kind—in the monstrous irony that for nearly two thousand years the Jewish people has been reviled and persecuted in the name of one of its sons, a figure as Jewish in his way as Hillel the Elder or Rabbi Akiva, who first was purloined from it, next turned into a Hellenized soteriological hero, and finally worshipped as a divinity by a third of the human race? Even today, stated baldly in this manner, the bare facts of the case seem so preposterous, so like a horrendous practical joke, that it remains easier simply to shake one's head over them in amazement than to give them serious thought.

Secondly, as is often the case when the historical imagination pursues an elusive subject, "reclaiming" Jesus for the Jews may not in the end tell us anything more definite about Jesus, but it will surely tell us something about the Jews. For in asking such questions as what, within the context of 1st-century Judaism, Jesus was trying to say; what, if anything, was unique about his teaching; whether this teaching, had it not been preempted and distorted at an early stage by anti-Jewish elements, could have been absorbed by the Judaism of his day; and whether it might still have any relevance to that of ours—we are forced to clarify our own sense of Jewishness, of its parameters, possibilities, and limits.

Given the ahistorical dogmatism of medieval religion, and the brutal chronicle of Christian treatment of Jews, it is hardly surprising that Jews in the past took Christianity's word for it that the protagonist of the Gospels had disowned his own people, or that they instinctively disowned him as well. Today we know too much for the old instincts to make any sense. In one way or another, it is indeed time Jews thought of Jesus as one of their own.

Radical's Journey

A LIFE IN TWO CENTURIES: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY. By BERTRAM D. WOLFE. Introduction by LEONARD SCHAPIRO. *Stein & Day. 728 pp. $29.95.*

Reviewed by JAMES NUECHTERLEIN

THIS is a disappointing book, but it is so for reasons largely beyond the author's control. When Bertram Wolfe died in 1977 at the age of eighty-one, he had managed to bring the story of his life only up to the outbreak of World War II, which left his memoirs a half-told tale. This made a particular difference in Wolfe's case, because his careers before and after the war were so radically opposed to each other.

Before the war, Wolfe belonged to the revolutionary Left: a left-wing Socialist in 1917, a founder of the American Communist party (CPUSA) in 1919, and, even after he had been tossed out of the Comintern and the CPUSA in 1929 by Stalin, a dedicated Marxist-Leninist throughout the 1930's. But after the war, in the part of his story he did not live to tell, he emerged as a committed, if non-fanatical, anti-Communist. The book that brought him his greatest fame, *Three Who Made a Revolution*, published in 1948, remains a classic account of the origins and practice of Bolshevism, and those who read it without blinkers are unlikely to retain any romantic illusions concerning the principles or behavior of Lenin, Trotsky, or Stalin. In the end, then, this engaging autobiography leaves us frustrated, not because of its own, mostly minor, flaws, but because it does not come far enough forward in time to account for what we want most to understand: the transformation of Wolfe's political beliefs.

Still, there are compensations. For the time that is covered, Wolfe has provided a lively, vigorous recounting. Although it is his years as a political activist that offer the greatest historical interest, readers might well find Wolfe's recollections of his childhood in Brooklyn and his early manhood as a student at CCNY the most compelling parts of the book. The remembrance of his boyhood crisis of religious faith, for example, is as sensitive and affecting a depiction of the making of an agnostic as one is likely to encounter. Wolfe writes of those years with unself-conscious charm, and gives us a portrait of the young man that reveals more of his personality than can sometimes be glimpsed in the story of the mature, political years. It is in these early pages that we get the most vivid sense of the qualities that marked Wolfe's personality and that led him first to be attracted to the Communist faith and later to

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reject it: enthusiasm and openness to begin with, accompanied by intense intellectual curiosity and, above all, a stubborn independence of spirit.

WOLFE came to Communism by an indirect route. A child of the 19th century, that stable era of "peace and progress" whose effective, if not chronological, boundaries are 1815 and 1914, Wolfe, like so many of his contemporaries, found the outbreak of the Great War a shattering, almost incomprehensible, experience. Total war seemed to Wolfe a monstrous and brutalizing break-point in human history. He hated the war itself and hated almost as much the mobilization of opinion and suppression of dissent that accompanied it. He became a Socialist when America entered the war in 1917 because the Socialists, at least the most radical of them, opposed the war despite the pressures for patriotic consensus. Commitment to the anti-war cause and to left-wing Socialism developed together, and by 1919 Wolfe joined the more militant members of his party in founding the CPUSA.

For the next twenty years, Wolfe remained an active, if sometimes heterodox, Communist. In his wanderings around the United States and Mexico, with the FBI occasionally on his trail, his involvements in party affairs were always at the center of his life. More often than not, his various jobs as writer, editor, and teacher involved radical causes. He served as a delegate to the Fifth and Sixth Congresses of the Communist International in Moscow in 1924 and 1928 respectively, the first time as a representative of the Mexican party, the second time as part of the American delegation. Life for Wolfe in the 1920's was an adventure, and his book communicates that sense to us, even if at times it seems as discontinuous and full of abrupt breaks and ramblings as the experience it records.

For Communists, sectarian intrigues came with the membership card. In the end, of course, Moscow spoke as authoritatively to its adherents as Rome did to pre-Vatican II Roman Catholics, but in the periods before or between binding pronouncements, party members engaged in endless internecine warfare. Wolfe inevitably got caught up in that warfare, and it eventually led to his expulsion from the party.

In the late 20's, Wolfe was a member of the faction of the American party led by Jay Lovestone, and in 1929 Stalin, for reasons having to do less with ideological purity than with a desire to demonstrate his personal authority, moved against the Lovestoneites. Denouncing the presumed heresy of "American exceptionalism," Stalin required of the Lovestone group that they submit to party discipline and confess their errors. As good "internationalists," Lovestone, Wolfe, and their allies were willing to accept the ultimate authority of the Comintern, but they would not prostrate themselves by repudiating positions they were sure were correct. And so Stalin, acting with the cold efficiency, if not the murderous finality, of the later purges, kicked them out of the party.

Wolfe and his friends showed courage in standing up to Stalin, but one cannot be certain how much of the break occurred over principle and how much involved choosing the wrong side in a power struggle. The ostensible issues, aside from the degree to which the American experience could be understood as deviating from the imperatives of Marxist historical development, included matters of intraparty democracy, Russian domination of American party affairs, dual unionism, and Moscow's insistence on designating all non-Communist leftists as "social fascists."

On all these questions, the Lovestonites took relatively more "liberal" positions than their opponents, but the differences were mostly marginal or tactical and the "deviationists" never questioned fundamental Marxist-Leninist prin-

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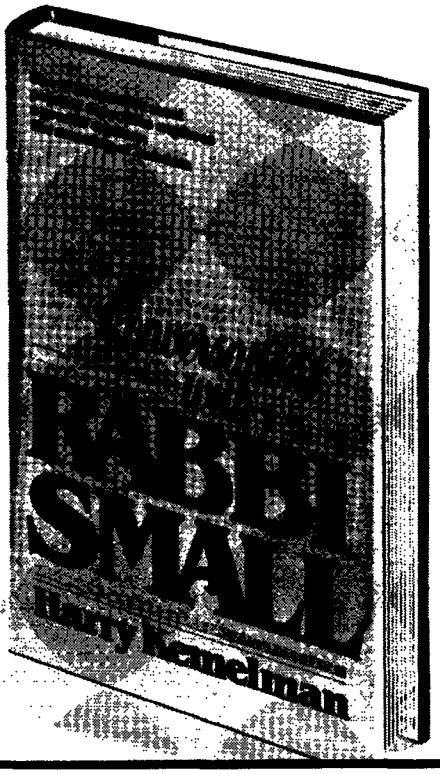

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ciples. They broke with Stalin—more properly, he broke with them—but they continued for years to call themselves Communists. Lovestone, indeed, supported Stalin's brutal policies within the Soviet Union during the early 30's and even held out the hope of eventual reconciliation with Moscow. It was only in 1936 that he came to agree with Wolfe's judgment concerning the Stalinists that "between us and them, a river of blood has flowed that no decent man will cross."

WOLFE was never other than a decent and honorable man, but aspects of his behavior remain difficult to comprehend. If he never joined with Lovestone in apologies for Stalin's actions in the 1930's, neither did he see fit to speak out about Soviet realities until the signing of the Nazi-Soviet pact in 1939. (Even as his anti-war sympathies had first drawn him to Communism, now they helped lead him away.) In general, it seems not unfair to suggest that it took longer than it should have done for Wolfe to understand that the problems of Communism went deeper than the pathologies of Stalin's personality.

It is not apology that we look for in this matter, but explanation. Wolfe simply does not tell us enough of what it was that attracted him to Communism in the first place and that kept him an at least nominal party member for so long. Many people, after all, opposed World War I and the Red Scare without taking the road to Moscow. The few paragraphs out of this very large book that Wolfe devotes to the lures of the Marxist faith are astute, but they are insufficient. There is nothing here of the emotional resonance one finds, for example, in the various remembrances gathered in *The God That Failed.* We never get from Wolfe the feel of what it meant to attach oneself to or detach oneself from the Communist party.

Nor is there adequate intellectual explanation. Throughout his life, Wolfe was a man of enormous and wide-ranging intellectual curiosity. But his autobiography, while it shows us the breadth of his interests and activities—the book is a treasure-house of personal adventures, discussions of art and literature, mini-biographies, brief histories, and assorted travelogues—does not deal in depth with political ideas. Of political intrigues, there is much; of political philosophy, disappointingly little. Thus we learn at great length of the books Wolfe wrote with and about the great radical painter, Diego Rivera, and of the adventures they shared in Mexico and America throughout the 20's and 30's, but we never get sufficient analysis of the Marxist faith that drew them both to it. This is the story of a life, not of a life's ideas.

It is entirely possible, of course, that Wolfe intended to deal more fully with these matters in his coverage of the postwar years. At any rate, we have what we have, and, wishing there were more, we can still be grateful that Wolfe lived long enough to conclude at least part of an intriguing and usable chapter in the history of modern American radicalism.

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Foundlings and Bastards

ORIGINS OF THE NOVEL. By MARTHE ROBERT. Translated by SACHA RABINOVITCH. *Indiana University Press. 235 pp. $19.95.*

Reviewed by RENEE WINEGARTEN

WHAT is the source of the human impulse to tell stories and to delight in them? Is there indeed one only? And if we knew what it was, would we be any nearer to rescuing literature (and particularly the novel), together with literary criticism, from the "post-humanist" tide? These are some of the questions prompted by *Origins of the Novel,* a speculative study by Marthe Robert, notable French authority on Kafka, translator of his journals, letters, and sto-

RENEE WINEGARTEN *is the author of* Writers and Revolution *and* The Double Life of George Sand.

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ries into French, and author of *The Psychoanalytic Revolution* and *From Oedipus to Moses: Freud's Jewish Identity.*

The original title of Marthe Robert's book, *Roman des origines et origines du roman,* gives a better idea of its contents than the English one does. Even if translated as *Novel of Origins and Origins of the Novel,* the first half of the nicely balanced title does not quite convey in English the element of romance or fairy tale in the expression *"roman des origines,"* which is an essential part of her argument. Marthe Robert maintains that the novel is so free and all-embracing that it cannot be defined in traditional ways. Her ambitious—and, some might think, vain—quest is for some deeper theory of the novel that would lead to a more solid form of criticism largely independent of received attitudes.

THE first part of her original title derives from Freud's essay of 1909, "The Family Romance of Neurotics." Following Freud, Marthe Robert suggests that the infant, in his early disillusionment with the parents he has idealized, invents a compensatory fable. He tells himself that his parents cannot be his true parents: in short, that he is a "Foundling." From there, it is only a small step for the child to feel that, while his ordinary mother can remain the same, his real and distant father is of royal blood: thus, he is a "Bastard." In both cases, he dreams of different areas in which to exercise power.

It is in this "family romance" or family novel that the author would place the psychological origins of the novelistic genre. Since, in her view, the Oedipus complex is a "universal human fact," all forms of fiction and image-making in art are to some degree a veiled illustration of it. (Indeed, the author is so trusting a Freudian that she believes in Freud's invisible "vulture" as the phallic mother in Leonardo da Vinci's painting, *The Madonna and Child with Saint Anne,* an error due to the Viennese master's misconstruing the Italian word for "kite.")

So, for Marthe Robert, fiction can be divided into a subjective, otherworldly fantasy woven by the Foundling, or into a realistic-seeming slice of life invented by the Bastard, the man on the make who uses women for his own advancement. Since the Bastard issues from the Foundling, the two may well conveniently alternate in the same novelist. She proceeds to illustrate her thesis chiefly through Cervantes, Defoe, Balzac, and Flaubert, arguably among the most influential creative geniuses of the form.

How far readers can bring themselves to assent to this thesis as a valid interpretation of the story-telling impulse will largly depend on whether they accept the Oedipus complex as a "universal human fact." As is well known, however, some post-Freudians think it varies between cultures instead of being a universal phenomenon; others decline to give it a central position; while it has long aroused feminine, not to say feminist, skepticism. And indeed, great women writers are conspicuously absent from Marthe Robert's book (only Madame de La Fayette's *La Princesse de Clèves* is classified mysteriously among creations by Bastards like Choderlos de Laclos and Benjamin Constant). To think for a moment of Jane Austen, for instance, might serve to introduce a note of destructive humor.

Apart from Freud, one possible source of Marthe Robert's approach to literature would seem to be the writings of Jean-Paul Sartre, who was obsessed with literal or figurative bastards. Francis Jeanson once constructed a study of Sartre's work around the very concept of bastardy. And it is Roquentin, in *La Nausée,* that novel about the modern crisis of literature, who is moved by a jazz song "on the other side of existence," the place Marthe Robert sees as the compensatory utopian realm of the Foundling.

INSOFAR as all novelists create another world, the categories of fantasy and slice of life appear less than satisfactory. Granted that fictional reality is not empirical reality, it can, however, be truth-seeming and even, notwithstanding

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modern prosaic materialists, true in accordance with the inner laws of the imagination. The enticing question of illusion and reality, which has fascinated writers and artists at least since the high Renaissance and the early Baroque, figures in Marthe Robert's book simply in different guise.

The masterpiece of Cervantes, for instance, is built on this theme. But what were his intentions in *Don Quixote*? Marthe Robert envisages the deranged knight not as a righter of wrongs but as an aggressor whose quest for power is disguised as a noble ascetic ideal. The luckless shepherd boy, Andrés, rescued by Don Quixote from a beating by his master (who continues the punishment more vigorously when the rescuer's back is turned), appears to her as the victim of the Don's power complex. This is indeed what Andrés ultimately thinks. But who is telling the truth, the boy or his employer —or both? Must every attempt to improve the human lot misjudge human depravity? Tragic undertones are surely to be sensed beneath Cervantes's mocking irony which Marthe Robert tends to overlook.

All the same, some of her best pages are concerned with the Spaniard's mask of neutrality. She favors the hypothesis, current in recent years, that Cervantes was of Jewish origin. Unlike Dominique Aubier, who has found a kabbalistic message hidden in *Don Quixote*, Marthe Robert depicts Cervantes as a Catholic in name only, one who feels ambivalent toward his former coreligionists while remaining clear-sighted about the gap between public ideal and common practice in his Christian compatriots. Such a man would be ready to invent a more flattering biography, that of a Foundling, like the variously-named, obscure country squire who created himself Don Quixote, Knight of the Doleful Countenance.

With 19th-century novelists—like Stendhal and Balzac whose Bastard adventurers not unsurprisingly fit her thesis—the author has an easier time. This is partly because the French Revolution brought political power to the forefront of the literary imagination and within the grasp of the man of letters. Besides, novelists now revealed more details about their childhood and sometimes anticipated Freud's insights in the process. All too frequently, moreover, they were hysterics, neurotics, or epileptics. Flaubert—no less than Dostoevsky—brings poisoned gifts to the Freudian critic. Doctors have not yet finished with the author of *Madame Bovary*: controversy still rages (and no doubt will continue to do so) about the exact nature of his neurosis or disease.

In a semi-autobiographical fictional work, *Memoirs of a Madman*, written when Flaubert was only sixteen, the narrator has a horrible cannibalistic castration nightmare. Here, Marthe Robert traces Freud's Primal Scene (afterward queried by Freud's very Wolf Man himself), and suggests that as a child Flaubert saw or thought he saw his parents engaged in sexual intercourse. This, she boldly claims, is the missing link that explains Flaubert's later rejection of everyday existence and his loathing of procreation. Yet his horror of life might just as readily be "explained" by his childhood glimpse of his father at work in the Rouen hospital dissecting theater.

While *Memoirs of a Madman* can be seen as rooted in autobiography, it remains a work of fiction. The greatest caution should always be exercised whenever a writer of fiction, however young, appears to be most candid about himself. It is, moreover, rash to suggest that Balzac and Flaubert painted self-portraits in certain fictional characters, without offering stronger qualifications about the transforming nature of the literary process itself. Above all, as with Flaubert's admired master, Cervantes, Marthe Robert take insufficient account of the novelist's irony, and she neglects, too, his fondness for exaggeration, noted by those who knew him well.

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If readers expect some continuation into the present day, they will be disappointed. They are told that the adventures of the Bastard in the Western novel lie in the past or are nearing their end. We know that literature has sadly lost its preeminent position. It seems unlikely that Marthe Robert's theory—or any other—will serve to reverse this dismal trend. Whether the source of imaginative literature is to be found in the Oedipus complex or not, a novel cannot be better than the quality of the novelist's mind, as Balzac's disciple, Henry James, once observed. The shaping faculty of the novelist's craft cannot be overlooked in what is essentially a form of magic or sleight of hand.

Thought Control

THE BUREAUCRACY OF TRUTH: HOW COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS MANAGE THE NEWS. By PAUL LENDVAI. *Westview Press. 285 pp. $24.75.*

Reviewed by ARCH PUDDINGTON

PAUL LENDVAI's study of the mass communications policies in the Soviet bloc is important not only for its much needed perspective on a widely misunderstood subject, but also because it represents the kind of intelligent anti-Communist journalism which is invaluable for a serious evaluation of the totalitarian phenomenon. Lendvai, a Hungarian émigré who works as a reporter for the *Financial Times* of London, sees the workings of totalitarianism not only in the Soviet Union but also in the East European satellites, including those which have developed the most tolerant internal policies.

As in Stalin's era, Soviet press policies are instructed by an absolute commitment to Marxist-Leninist ideology, the maintenance of complete control over the means of production and distribution of information, durability in the face of a hostile populace, and a dedication to the export of this communications "model" wherever and whenever opportunities arise. If the Communists are less successful at keeping their citizens ignorant of world events, it is not for lack of trying, but is rather a consequence of policies adopted by the democratic world that were designed to meet the special problems posed by totalitarian news control.

Despite the changes Soviet society has undergone in the post-Stalin era—a marked rise in educational levels, increased standards of living, a relaxation of the most draconian workplace controls—there has been little improvement in the average Soviet citizen's access to accurate information about his own society, much less world events. The goal of Soviet censorship remains what Richard Lowenthal has called the control of "the formation of opinion at the source by the planned selection of all the elements of information." There is nothing random about the Kremlin's news-management techniques. A formidable—and, for a society experiencing widespread economic difficulties, quite expensive—bureaucracy has been established to decide what will and will not be published or broadcast. Ultimately, the deadening stuff that is selected to fill the pages of *Pravda*—the texts of Central Committee manifestoes, accounts of workers who overfulfill the norm, telegrams of congratulation on the leader's birthday, reports of "record" harvests—is of less significance than the fact that there exist massive areas of domestic life about which most citizens know absolutely nothing. Concerning these subjects, a policy of near-total censorship has been imposed. When not ignored altogether, they are given a cursory and elliptical coverage designed to generate more confusion than understanding.

Figuring out which issues have been declared off-limits for public consumption is not difficult. All that is required is to draw up a list of those social problems which have provoked controversy and protest in the non-Communist world; as far as the Soviet media are concerned, such problems exist only in

ARCH PUDDINGTON *is executive director of the League for Industrial Democracy and editor of a new magazine on workers' rights in the Communist world, which will begin publication in the fall.*

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the decadent West. To this day, those Soviet citizens whose sources of news are limited to the domestic media have no idea of the true extent of their country's military involvement in Afghanistan. They know nothing of the extent of casualties, the degree of Afghan resistance, or the disintegration of the Afghan army. All that has been reported is that a "limited military contingent" was sent to Afghanistan at the request of the government in order to help put down disorders stirred up by "outside intervention."

Another area of special sensitivity is the environment, including such sticky questions as nuclear power and industrial safety. Where in the West the construction of a highway can set off bitter and prolonged dispute, and the establishment of a nuclear-energy program can decide the fate of governments, in the Soviet Union such questions pose no such headaches for the regime, which can impose its will without having to worry about the sensitivities of public opinion. Overt repression of protest movements is seldom necessary, since the potential protesters are kept ignorant of government decisions until they are implemented.

A good illustration of the extraordinary lengths to which the Soviets will go to muffle public curiosity about controversial issues is the treatment of the nuclear question. In a country where accounts of major air disasters are rarely published, it comes as no surprise that no mention has ever been made of the 1957 nuclear disaster which, according to Zhores Medvedev and other émigrés, produced hundreds of deaths and injuries. More instructive is the reticence in discussing the Three Mile Island incident. Where Western leftists saw this event as a unique opportunity to launch a noisy indictment of capitalism, the Soviets responded with the utmost caution, burying brief accounts in the back pages of their newspapers out of apparent fear that questions might be raised about their own ambitious nuclear program.

In addition to maintaining a firm grip on their own media, the Communists are also engaged in a vigorous effort to export their communications "model" to the Third World. Training centers for Third World journalists have been established in East Germany and Hungary with special emphasis given to indoctrinating journalists from countries vulnerable to takeovers by forces sympathetic to Communism, as well as writers from various "liberation" movements in the underdeveloped world.

The Soviets are also vocal advocates of the New World Information Order, and provide various forms of "technical assistance" to those Third World countries which are leading the campaign within UNESCO for the adoption of a global censorship system. The obvious humbug that informs the demands for international control of Western "transnational" media is reinforced by the Soviet Union's prominent role in the debate, especially since it is the Soviets, and not the United States, who operate the world's most extensive press empire. This includes a foreign-broadcast network that maintains over 2,000 hours of air time each week in 84 languages. The Soviets also operate a mammoth publication, public-relations, and news-distribution system which disseminates propaganda material throughout the world. The cost of this is over $2 billion annually; when the domestic Soviet media and censorship apparatus, and similar operations in the satellites, are added in, the result is a huge expenditure of money, creative thinking, and planning devoted to controlling what the citizens of Communist countries think and to persuading the outside world of the merits of Soviet-style Marxism.

ALTHOUGH Lendvai draws a thoroughly grim picture of the state of press freedom in the Communist world, his ultimate message is far from pessimistic. For while Com-

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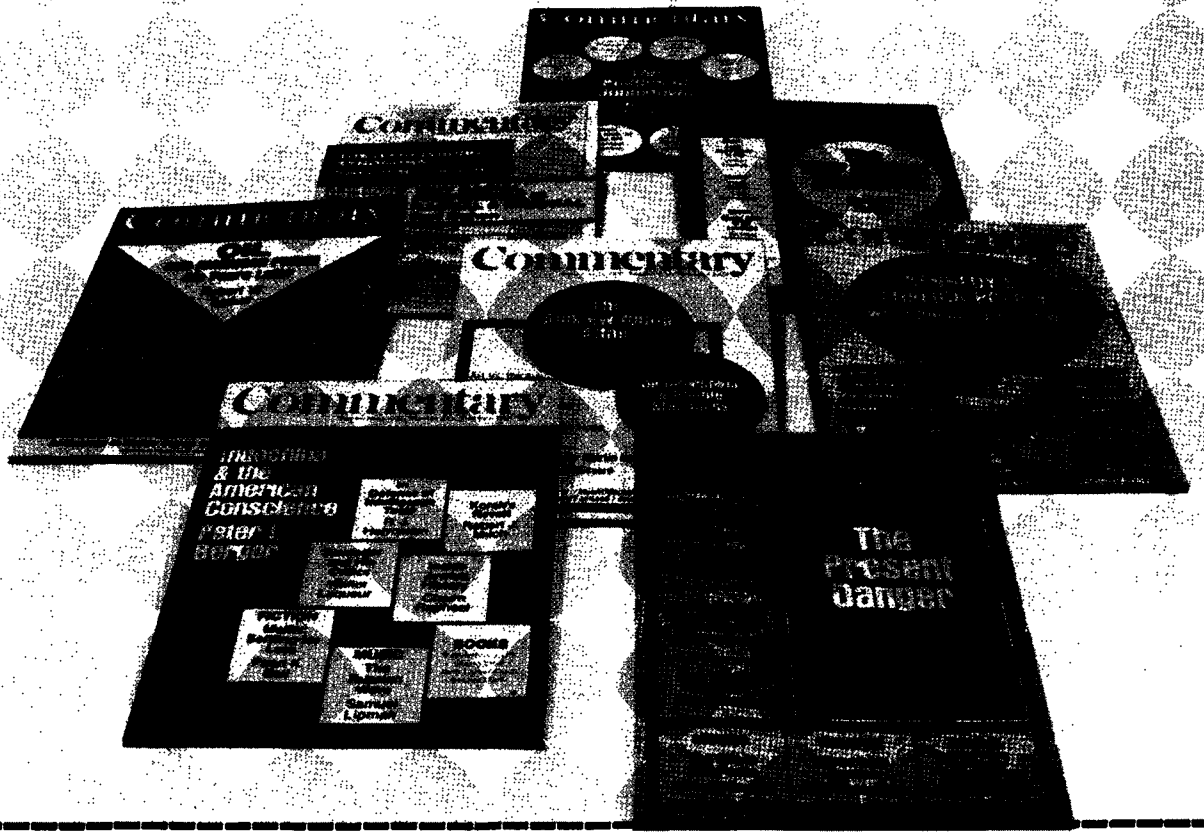

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munist regimes have succeeded in keeping a monopoly grip on their domestic media, they have not been able to prevent the penetration of their societies by broadcast services emanating from the West. Well over half of all East Europeans outside the Soviet Union listen regularly to Western broadcasts, with 45 percent alone listening to Radio Free Europe (RFE), considered by Lendvai to be the service most effective at providing an alternative information source to the Soviet bloc.

Although RFE was criticized, deservedly according to Lendvai, for its overheated rhetoric during the 1956 Hungarian revolution, its subsequent policies have been characterized by prudence, intelligence, and restraint. Today it enjoys a high degree of credibility throughout the satellites, which the author attributes to its factual, thorough, and objective coverage of events in the Communist world. Thus, Radio Free Europe played a crucial role during the Polish upheavals which led to the establishment of the Solidarity trade-union movement, and it did so, as one union leader commented, "not by inciting workers but simply by letting them know the facts about what was happening."

Radio Free Europe, then, stands as one of the great anti-Communist success stories of American foreign policy. Yet it was not so long ago that its existence and that of its sister service, Radio Liberty, which transmits into the Soviet Union, were threatened by those who saw the radio services as "relics of the cold war" (Senator J. William Fulbright's phrase) inappropriate in a time of détente.

Here is yet further evidence of the foolishness and irresponsibility which underlay the philosophy of détente. Had George McGovern been elected President, or had Richard Nixon moved more forthrightly to bring our policies into conformity with the "code of détente"—as he was vigorously urged to do by a number of East bloc leaders—there would have been no Radio Free Europe to keep the Polish workers informed about the historic events they were participating in, or to provide the people of Rumania, Czechoslovakia, and other countries with alternatives to the shabby commentary accorded Poland by the controlled media. Fortunately, Radio Free Europe survived, and is now operated under quasi-government sponsorship. Now, at a time when an increasing number of people are seriously pondering what strategies the West might adopt to encourage the destabilization of the Soviet empire, the Radio Free Europe experience should take on added meaning.

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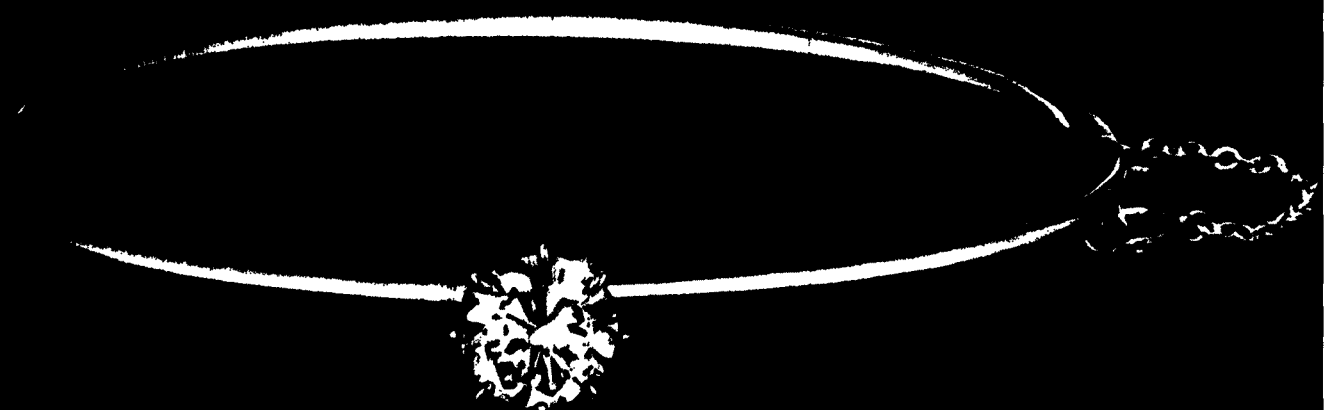
She can't wear a Ming vase to La Bohème.



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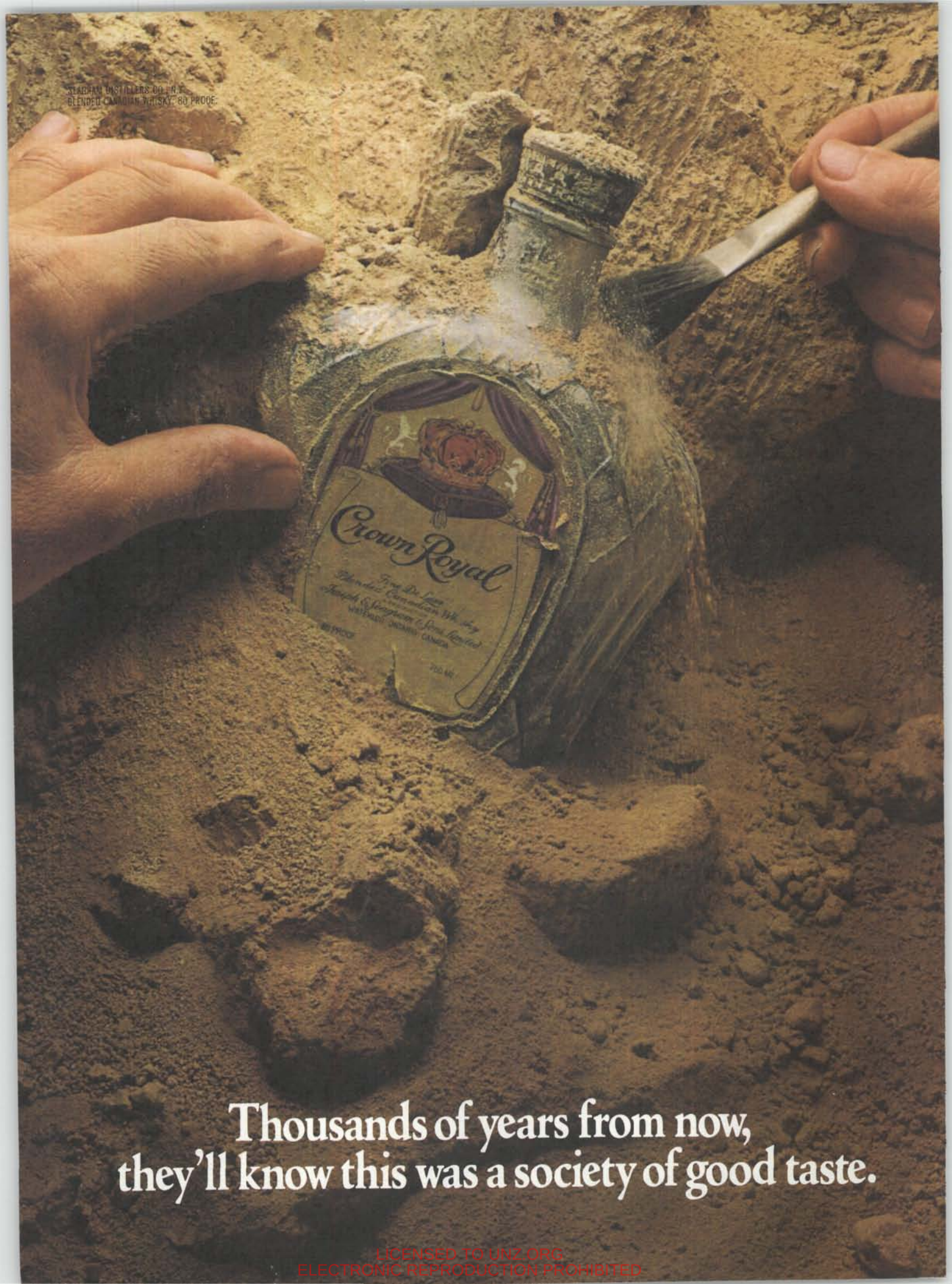

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